Wayside Musings

Luman A. Ballou

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The Author

WAYSIDE MUSINGS

By

LUMAN A. BALLOU

ILLUSTRATED

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GRATEFULLY DEDICATED
TO MY
DEAR WIFE

PREFACE

In this little collection of various subjects, put in verse, the author claims no credit for superiority, or for any thought not expressed before by others. The verses were written over a period of about fifty years and were composed simply for the gratification or pleasure they gave at the time. Many of the reading public labor under a mistaken idea, and seem to think the poets write mostly of themselves; but a more erroneous conclusion could hardly be entertained. They, of course, write of some things that have more or less to do with their own experience but mostly of what they have read, or events that happen around them in ordinary, everyday life. Many of the poems are true in their entirety while others are a compilation of various circumstances, others, idle dreamings. The author has tried to avoid plagiarism, but has used the style of verse, which we are inclined to regard as common property. They were written with no thought of remuneration except as stated above, and until within six months no serious thought was entertained by the author for their publication, and now it is only by the earnest solicitation of friends that consent was given. The verses were composed under all sorts of condi-

tions pertaining to a busy farm life. Neither eulogy nor criticism is invited.

"Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have give I thee."—Acts 3:6.

Whether good or indifferent they had their origin in the following manner:

When in the fields behind my team,
  Or in my sleigh or wagon,
Many a line would come to mind,
  But none I wish to brag on;
No den, or sanctum I possessed,
My knee, or dashboard was my desk,
And when a theme much me impressed
  I simply tacked a tag on.

Whether good or ill, I cannot tell,
  But as a general rule,
Parents love their children just as well,
  Be they deft, deformed or fool.
So I've gathered up at my command,
My offsprings in this little band,
And sent them forth to fall or stand,
  By critics wise and cool.

L. A. B.

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A SKETCH

The author of these poems, Luman Adolphus Ballou, was born in Danby, Vermont, July 1st, 1844, being the sixth in a family of ten children, and the only one having the distinction of birth in a log house, the family temporarily living in one at this period. While still a small lad, his father bought a lot, and erected a cottage, in a little valley in Pawlet, where memory weaves many a web, a few of which appear in "Recollections." Being far from a school his advantages were meagre and a board and blackened coal were often his only slate, tablet or pencil. Very early the muse of poetry seemed to haunt the little fellow, as this fragment is preserved composed when seven years old. In climbing a small tree, to look into the nest of a goldfinch he accidentally spilled the eggs and this was his account of the affair:

'Twas on last Wednesday, I will confess,
I robbed a yellow bird of her nest;
I plagued her to a sore degree,
But now the same it does plague me.

When she saw her eggs had fell,
This poor old bird set up a yell,
Such screams and cries I never heard,
As come from that old mother bird.

Then I started for my home,
By myself and all alone,
"I think I'll never do so again,
To give a poor bird so much pain."

One by one, mother, father, and half the children had passed on by the time he had reached his sixteenth year, leaving a young brother and sister to his guardian care, so scholastic advantages were still very much curtailed and like his distinguished, though distant relative the Rev. Hosea Ballou, unremitting labor was his portion, snatching a leaf here and there from the tree of learning, as opportunity afforded, till the breaking out of the Civil War. Patriotism ran high among the young men of the community and he offered himself with others for the country's service, several times being rejected on account of youth and slenderness, but at last was accepted and making provision for the children dependant upon him, went to the front at nineteen years of age as a recruit of Company G, Seventh Regiment Vermont Volunteer Infantry. His feelings at this period are expressed in "A Soldier's Musings." He served two and one-half years in the Department of the Gulf, stationed at Forts Barrancas and Pickens, Florida, was at the taking of Mobile and Defences, and later at Brownsville, Texas, being mustered out of the United States service March 14th, 1866.

Some time after returning he married, and began the life of a farmer and stock dealer, which vocation he has followed ever since in the towns of Andover, Windham and Chester. The Poetic muse has been his rather erratic companion, sometimes forsaking him entirely, at others

spinning yarns and rhymes incessantly. In Windham his home nestled at the foot of Glebe Mountain. On removal to his present home the following item appeared in the County paper: "L. A. Ballou, the Glebe Mountain poet for the Londonderry "Sifter" and Vermont "Tribune," has begun to move his goods to Chester, where he is soon to become a resident. Whether he can muse as well in the valley as on the hill remains to be seen. During his residence here he has been an active and successful business man, and will be missed."

That the muse has been even more kind in the later years is proved by the number of productions. Many are stories told to the little boy by father and grandmother. One by his father was the foundation of "Death's Warnings." Years after its production, a similar one entitled "The Three Warnings," by Mrs. Thrale, came to his notice and he was struck by their close resemblance; yet the muse developed the theme somewhat differently in the two minds. "John and Mary" and "Grandmother's Story" are other examples of the nine year old boy's attention to tales as told by a loved Grandmother.

Thanks are due and gladly given to all who have in any way aided in making this volume a success, and we hope the anticipated pleasure of friends may be fully realized.

MARY A. BALLOU.

WAYSIDE MUSINGS

THE RIVER OF LIFE

SLOW fades the light in the western sky,
The cool night breeze with moaning sigh
Through hedge and trees went whistling by
With doleful sound.
All nature wearied at day's close,
From real care or fancied woes,
In Morpheus arms found sweet repose
In sleep profound.

No sound was heard but the wind's low howl,
Except the note of some distant owl,
Or call of some nocturnal fowl
In vocal minstrelsy.
For sweet repose I sought my cot,
Meditation deep engaged my thought
In things that are, though seeming not,
A solemn mystery.

At last kind sleep, the friend of man,
My eye-lids touched with her magic wand,
I was transferred from this mortal strand
To perfect light.

Brightest of suns were shining there,
And sweetest song birds singing near,
Reflected rays in water clear
Dazzled my sight.

A mighty river or crystal stream
Whose fountain source no eye hath seen,
From heights obscure, sublime, serene,
It moved along.
While on its crest with seeming pride,
All moving, heaving with the tide,
Continually and swiftly glide
A mighty throng.

Then spake a voice in accents low,
"I see my friend you fain would know
From whence these come and where they go
On this broad river.
But those embarked can't tell you why,
Nor for this voyage did they apply,
They are passing on as time passes by
And know not whither.

This mighty river that you see,
Which moves along majestically,
Flows from the mount Eternity
From springs unknown.
And those who float upon its tide
Must pay the price the laws provide,
Of certain death to all who ride
Nor favor shown.

The helpless babe on its mother's breast,
So kindly cuddled, kissed, caressed,
Is torn away from heart's distressed,
Flung in the spray.
Or decrepit age with tottering form,
Whose only hope in life's dark storm,
Their manly son away was borne
The debt to pay.

And so it is with every other
Father, mother, sister, brother,
Husband, wife, sweetheart or lover
Soon must go down
This dreadful stream whose onward flow
So full of joy, so full of woe,
Its final port no one can know,
Yet hopes abound."

And as I gazed while the tale was told,
The placid stream grew dark and cold,
Each joyous face looked pinched and old
So changed the scene.
Upon these waters must I ride,
And by such fate must I abide?
I moaned, I groaned, awoke and sighed
'Tis but a dream!

ODE ON MAN

THERE was a time when the world was young,
And man lay hid in silent Earth
Like as a diamond, the sands among,
Or the image in the unchiseled stone,
When the mighty Master's hand began
To bring him forth.

So when the creative power was done,
With the make and mold of the physical man,
A summons went forth to every one,
To before the Mighty Maker come,
To receive endowments prepared for them
By a generous giver's hand.

The first advanced and received his prize
From amid the gathered throng:
The hearing ear, the seeing eyes,
An understanding heart that makes one wise,
And every art that doth comprise
Or to wisdom doth belong.

Life's joys are stale when once we know
What sorrow reigns within our land.
He saw the world in morals low,
He heard the wail of want and woe;
His soul the strain would not forego
And perished by his own hand.

The next with love was well supplied,
Or with the tender passion given,
For which none need to blush or hide,
If only just and well applied,
Earth's only hope, earth's only pride
And joy of heaven.

He took his gift to the full extent,
Nor with restraint was he supplied;
To love but one, was not content,
On many loves his heart was bent,
In folly's train his life was spent
And young he died.

The next with caution, oft called care,
Was given with abundant store,
Which well directed anywhere,
Is sure to yield an ample share
Of all good things of this world's ware,
Until our cup runs o'er.

But this poor man was over-dosed,
And viewed each scene from its darkest side;
Each passing cloud was a storm, almost,
And every closet contained a ghost;
In anxious care his eyes were closed—
He also died.

Then came one to the giver near,
With faltering step and unsteady eyes,
And received a full amount of fear

Which made his life a torture here;
A thing of reproach, contempt and jeer,
If not to be despised.

A curious fact there doth appear,
That man was made creation's king;
And yet we find in every sphere
The most abject Slave is the slave of fear,
A shrinking, cringing, creature here,
Afraid of everything.

There's an ancient fable, that answers quite,
Of the boys who stoned the frogs for fun.
There's many a one who take delight
In torturing those they can affright,
And so this man, whether wrong or right,
Was glad when life was done.

The next with passion he did endow,
The most wretched object e'er was born;
He had small, black eyes, a low flat brow,
The least reproof he would not allow,
A subject of discord and row,
A beast in human form.

A jest or joke he could not stand,
Each trifling thing his anger sprung,
A real Ishmæl in the land,
Against each one he turned his hand,
In a fit of rage he killed a man,
And afterwards was hung.

And many more among the crowd
Were given gifts both small and great,
Some were selfish, some were proud,
Some to the god of mammon bowed,
But every one that were endowed
Received one common fate.

But some there were in that array,
Were given with no tacit rule,
If by intent, as it might not pay,
Or by mistake we can not say,
They were so made and so they stay,
The common bigot fool.

And each were charged before starting out,
To perform some certain task.
Some, saw defeat ere they turned about,
Others, disaster along the route
But the fool declared without a doubt,
"I can do anything you ask."

When wisdom, love, fear and care,
And passion in a fit of rage,
Were either dead or in despair,
The fool kept on with pompous air
And thought his fate supremely fair,
And died from extreme old age.

Since all is vain beneath the skies
As everything in reason show it;
And bliss for ignorance is the prize,

It is a folly to be wise.
No better gift this world supplies.
Than to be a fool and never know it.

DEATH'S WARNINGS

LEANDUS ROGERS of age we find,
His twentieth year had left behind,
A man to worldly sport inclined
Without a care;
While thoughts of a more substantial kind
He could never bear.

One day while in a joyous mood,
With his favorite horse upon which he rode,
While passing through a lonely wood,
Or secluded glen,
A horrid specter before him stood—
The dread of men.

Then said Leandus, "What is thy name,
And for what purpose hast thou come?
If for my service, don't refrain
Your wishes showing;
Otherwise I can't remain.
Sir! I'd be going."

"My name is Death," was the stern reply,
"And none my mission can defy;

I stop the breath and close the eye,
Life's struggles o'er.
I have come for you and you must die,
Nor live you more."

Then said Leandus, " 'Tis hardly fair,
I've lived a life so free from care;
I pray a little time you spare
Me, to arrange
My future prospects and prepare
For future change."

"Well, then," said Death, "if that be so,
For a season I will let thee go,
For even Death can pity show
To the sons of men,
And by three signs I will let you know
E'er I come again."

And so the matter closed that day,
Death taking his leave without delay.
Leandus returned in great dismay,
Yet, in after times,
He kept the same unaltered way
And watched for signs.

Years passed by—a full two score—
And yet were added a decade more;
And still old Rogers as before
No sign had seen,
But thought that Death had passed him o'er
Or had forgetful been.

One night while on his bed he lay,
Death came again and thus did say:
"Your time is up, now don't delay
Or tarry here,
You ne'er can see another day;
The end is near."

Then said Leandus, "How can this be?
I was to have been warned by signals three;
And though I've watched continually
None have I seen.
If even one had been given me
Prepared I'd been."

Says Death, "I warn without affright;
I breathed on thy locks they all turned white
I touched thine eyes they lost their sight,
I stopped thine ear.
I've kept my word. This very night
Ends thy career."

Solemnly the clock upon the wall,
Ticks off the moments as they fall;
A death-like stillness through the hall,
A mystery dread,
With the morning's sun, the servant's call
Found Rogers dead.

MY LADY

OLD time, you wretch, how dare do so?
So much your Arab practice show,
As on your headlong course you go
From day to day;
So many gifts on us bestow
Then take them all away.

Each blooming youth, with rosy cheek,
Whose star-lit eyes for pleasure seek,
And every grace that health bespeak
Soon fade away.
The form is bent the voice grows weak;
Alas, decay.

My lady, once so young and fair,
My pride, my comfort, and my care,
Whose wealth of silken chestnut hair
Was my delight;
Now other threads are gathering there,
A snowy white.

Her love-lit eyes all clear and bright,
And pearly teeth all even, white,
And cheeks the angels kissed, or might,
If it could have been,
Now those eyes with decreasing light
Are growing dim.

How changed those cheeks their roseate hue;
Those once full lips now thin and blue,

Those pearly teeth decayed and few
Now stand apart;
Which is the voice to me, and you,
"Of dust thou art;"

The form once straight as the line appears
Without the weight of care or fears,
Except of childhood's joys and tears
So quick and fleeting;
Now thinner, paler, bent by years,
Your voyage completing.

Each flower must fade that bloomed in spring,
Time sets its mark on everything;
For such a change how deep the sting
Old age, with silvery hair,
If to the heart no change it bring
What need we care.

But lady, dear, do not repine;
We both must bow to the monarch time
Who gave us youth, and health, and prime,
Now takes it away.
But still you're good, and true, and mine,
Till my last day.

SHALL I BE MISSED

SIX thousand years have rolled away,
Since man began, since man's decay;
And all save those of the present day,
That ever did exist,
Are mouldering back to mother clay,
And are they missed?

The weary traveler nigh to sink,
But struggling to the water's brink,
And takes a long refreshing drink;
Whoever would insist,
Or dare to say, or even think,
That draught is missed?

And so this ever changing throng,
As with time's pace it moves along;
When one is taken from them among,
By a hand that won't desist,
Their place is filled; and is it wrong?
How little missed!

Were I in other lands to roam,
In some other clime to find a home,
Far from friends and places known,
In former days of bliss,
Will then they think of one that's gone?
Shall I be missed?

And when comes that cherished time,
When the table lamps do brightly shine
With the warm voiced stove, and kettle's chime;
What charm so sweet as this?
Will some one speak some word of mine?
Shall I be missed?

And when is stilled this mortal breath,
The warm heart's blood is chilled by death,
And I at last am summoned forth,
By that power I can't resist,
Deep buried in the silent earth,
Shall I be missed?

And when the clothes I used to wear
Are folded with such solemn care,
And laid away up the chamber stair
In some treasured trunk or chest,
When some dear hand comes searching there,
Shall I be missed?

But when that world that's hid from view,
Shall ope its gates and let me through,
And all those I ever loved, or knew,
Have crossed that dark abyss,
Where death shall never more pursue,
There'll none be missed.

"A SOLDIER'S MUSINGS"

I LEFT my dear home and friends far away,
All for a soldier to be,
For the same reason which many have had,
Which affords little pleasure to me,
My prospect of joy in the fair sunny South,
Is far too small to discern,
But Dina she has no love for me,
Therefore, I don't wish to return.

It's no trifling matter a soldier to be,
Mid carnage and strife to be found,
But like a true soldier my duty I'll do,
If I like some others go down;
And if amid-battle I meet my death blow,
And launch my bark off from life's shore,
Adieu, my dear friends, likewise ye fair one,
My few little troubles are o'er.

"I'M WITH YOU DARLING IN MY DREAMS"

SOFTLY the light of the morn is diffusing
Sweetly the zephyrs sweep over the lea,
All Nature seems singing a song of her choosing
But sad are the echoes reflected on me.
They mind me of joys in days long departed
When I've tasted life's pleasures mid happier scenes,

Of my Kitty, so pretty, so kind, and true hearted;
Darling, I'm ever with you in my dreams.

All the long day of you I am thinking
What pleasures attend you, or how you may fare;
From the cup of regret I surely am drinking,
Mine is the sorrow, yours is the care.
How well I remember your often told promise
It comes to my heart like an angel it seems
Though years may have flown, and youth has gone from us
Yet darling I'm ever with you in my dreams.

But Kitty, my darling, don't be discontented,
And though we are severed, pray do not repine
The fates that ordain, cannot be prevented
But cherish the hope that is yours and mine.
In the soft sighing winds I hear your voice calling;
With remorseful regrets my memory teems.
Sad and dejected, till night shades are falling,
Then, darling, I'm ever with you in my dreams.

What joy would it give, could I only be knowing
These lines you could lay on your beautiful breast

And wish from a heart with love overflowing
That my weary head there pillowed might rest.
Remember my darling if you should deceive me
My star will have set with its beautiful beams;
No reproof will I give, though sadly it grieve me,
Still darling, I'm ever with you in my dreams.

Yes, darling, in slumber I seem to behold thee,
I gaze on thy face, so sweet, and so fair,
In a loving embrace, in my arms I enfold thee,
And awake only kissing the cold, empty air.
True love alone, time or distance can't sever
Though friendship oft withers at parting, it seems.
Waking or sleeping, I am with you ever,
For, darling, I'm ever with you in my dreams.

THE TRAMP

AS I sat warmly in the lamp light,
Of a winter's eve an hour to spend,
Myself amusing, I was persuing
Some beautiful stanzas Wordsworth penned;
Whose words don't perish by the using,
And worth will last till time shall end.

Outside the cold west winds were blowing,
With snow the earth was mantled o'er,

A fire was glowing, and plants were growing,
On window-ledge, and stool, and floor,
When there came a rapping, and a tapping,
Like Edgar's "Raven" at my kitchen door.

I quickly arose, to the door I hastened,
And there by the light of the burning lamp,
In the door-way just before me
Stood a wretched shivering tramp,
Whose every look and action showed me
A vagrant of the lowest stamp.

A night's lodging he requested;
We know the blessed "Book" declares
We should take heed whom we lodge, and feed,
For some have Angels unawares;
On such a night, I could not concede
That one would mix with this world's affairs.

He said he'd tried long ere 'twas dark,
But not a soul could he find to keep him,
That all night long he would have to walk
To keep himself from freezing;
I told him then he'd better start,
Which seemed anything but pleasing.

He started off, and said no more,
Then through the hall I did quickly run
To the front door, just to explore,
And see if he went the way he'd come,
When back to me the night winds bore
In tones most solemn, O, ho, hum.

I felt a lump come in my swallow.
My pity 'rose for such a state,
I felt a sorrow, and a horror,
When I remembered Christie's fate,
I would have kept him till the morrow
But he was gone, it was too late.

Ofttimes our woes are self-invited,
And many a life has been undone
By sinful sloth, or seasons slighted,
The Siren's call or love of rum,
And left in this bright world benighted
To sadly murmur, O, ho, hum.

I often think of that winter's eve,
Of what has that poor wretch become,
And did I truly do my duty
As said our Lord I should have done?
For often to my memory surely
Comes that voice heart-broken, O, ho, hum.

LA GRIPPE

YE power that rules both earth and air,
Who sends the rain and weather fair
And scatters germs, we know not where,
And spreads disease to many.
One favor still we would implore,
What surplus grippe there is in store
Please send it to some desert shore,
We do not wish for any.

Though plentiful we cannot praise
An article so hard to raise,
Which holds its grip for many days,
Nor stops one blessed minute.
With aching head and ague chills,
And being fed on broth and pills,
All being capped with doctor's bills,
We don't care to be "in it."

All through this land, it speeds along,
To hamlet lone or cities throng,
Nor spares in mercy, weak nor strong
From smallest to the largest.
But leaves its track, now here, now there,
The empty crib or vacant chair,
While the doctor and the undertaker,
Have reap'd a golden harvest.

ODE ON THE DEATH OF A DOG

GOOD-BY poor Jack, good faithful fellow,
With hair so short of gray and yellow.
Now still in death thou art.
The powers that be, that brought you here,
To live and love, to trust and fear,
And every master to revere,
Now bids you to depart.

There is a clause in our modern laws.
'Though I hardly see sufficient cause,
Or reason why,

That every dog of a certain breed,
However good for spunk or speed,
By this self-same law it is decreed
Must licensed be or die.

It was no lack of yours, poor Jack,
In character or grace;
But there are men with words so smooth,
Whene'r they wish to change their love,
A former sweetheart will remove
To give another place.

And this you see was your master's plea,
'Though said perhaps in fun:
A pair of dogs he could not afford,
And have to license, keep and board;
Besides, received but small reward,
With business but for one.

When there was a sound of steps around,
Or signs of approaching harm,
Then quick rang out on the cool night air
Your well-known bark, so sharp and clear,
Showing a faithful sentinel there,
Sounding the alarm.

But, little Jack, could you look back
To scenes of earth,
There's many a cur this world endures,
By fraud and falsehood fame secures,
Whose wretched life's worth less than yours,
Not registered since birth.

No promises were you known to break,
Or any trade presume to make
On Sunday, conscience free,
With mouth and paws all clean and neat
From talking scandal or taking sheep,
And never was caught in bed asleep
Where another dog should be.

In one thing more thou did exceed
Thy brethren of the two-legged breed,
Yes, more than one:
At home you e'er was found at night,
And on poor rum you ne'er got tight,
Or led the young astray from right,
Nor after sirens run.

In life's bright days but little praise
Concerning thee was said;
In this respect you're not alone,
It is a fact that's clearly shown,
Great dogs and men are little known
Till after they are dead.

If only were given a license for living
To those of worth and merit,
There's many a one both high and low,
Members of the church or no,
Smuggling through this world must go,
Or render up the spirit:
You would have lived, while we should die,
Good-by, poor Jack, good-by.

THE BRAT

HEY'O, my boy, all mirth and glee
No prince's son, or high-born lad
With joy can half so happy be
And yet the fates have used you bad,
Only two removes from a high degree,
To ignorance, sloth and poverty.

Some sneer at you, and make their brags
That such as you their class disdains.
Yet as good blood courses beneath your rags
As ever throbbed through Cæsar's veins
Yet badly mixed, I must confess,
With all that tends to lawlessness.

You stone their cows and steal their fruit,
And then you're not the least afraid,
In time of need and destitute,
With the boldest face to ask their aid,
Then laugh, and skip, and have your fun
O'er the very mischief you have done.

Your greatest want is to eat and sleep,
And care for naught but the present day.
All education is obsolete,
Except what tends to fun and play.
You never knew your father's name,
And care as little about the same.

On yonder hill in that fine estate,
Lives a gentleman in serene repose,

Highly respected, being rich and great,
He is your grandpa, boy, yet no one knows;
And the chickens you stole the other night
Belong to you by a certain right.

Your youthful days you spend in sport,
Caring naught for the good and true.
At an early age you seek and court
And marry some girl as low as you,
And then a numerous family raise
For the poor-house or some penal place.

How very proud must a parent be,
If it so be they chance to know,
To see his own posterity
Descend the scale of life so low
For sinful pleasure at length he found
'Twas but sowing seed on stony ground.

Sometimes out comes from such a race
A man of vast superior mind,
Well qualified to fill each place
Of trust and honor among mankind,
And still we wonder at the fact,
'Tis from stolen blood generations back.

But creation moves and takes no heed
Of erring man or what he's done,
No favor shows any certain breed;
Each get their share of rain and sun,
And when a few short years are past
All pay the debt of life at last.

THAT EARLY SPRING

WHERE is the man and what's his name
Who conjured up and did proclaim
An early spring we should obtain
From such a winter?
Against the humbug with disdain,
Our protest enter.

When cold and fierce the winds did blow,
And high was heaped the drifting snow,
And all was steeped in cheerless woe,
For us poor creatures,
The frost crept through our wall below,
And nipped our "taters."

With fingers froze and chilblained feet,
And ears and nose that peeled complete,
While chilled potatoes, tho' slightly sweet,
Are not the thing.
Yet all these woes we did bravely meet,
For our early spring.

In shortest days and coldest weather,
When warmth and joy had fled together,
And naught was left to give us pleasure,
But hope of spring so fair,
We calmed our rage in ample measure,
Nor swore a sware.

Now what a scene for lovely May;
No meadow green or flowret gay,
  While snow and mud their might display,
    O'er hill and plain,
  To give the past, for present pay,
    Does nothing gain.

How could a man with sober face
Tell such a lie and hope for grace?
  A trusting public's hope misplace;
    The wanton liar,
  When there's provided in such a case,
    A lake of fire?

A subject here seems well supplied,
Which kindly cautions, "don't confide
  In things foretold," and yet beside,
    They may come so.
  Concerning things unseen, untried,
    No one can know.

WHEN LOVE IS COLD

THERE are some things, that do exist,
  That stand the test of time the same,
That all twist up, and then untwist,
  And then twist up again,
And no one knows or seems to care,
  Or sees the least unworthy point,
Or feel it is the worse for wear
  Because it once was out of joint.

The sun may rise, the sun may set,
And yet next morning bright is seen;
More welcome to the faces met
Because the night has come between.
And many a thing of highest mold
May vacilate and still remain,
But as for love when once it's cold.
It's never quite itself again.

A graceless son may curse his dad,
And lose his hope of earth and heaven,
Deny the honor he should have had,
Yet by that parent be forgiven.
We should forgive, so we are told
Full seventy and seven times the same;
But as for love, when once it's cold,
It's never quite itself again.

Two friends "fall out," become estranged
And for a while their friendship sever,
But time at length may bring a change,
They meet, make up, as good as ever,
The kindly shake of hands they hold,
Forgetting quite, which was to blame,
But as for love, when once it's cold
It's never quite itself again.

Love is a brittle plant at best,
Like Jonah's gourd 'tis often found,
Bitten by the worm of unfaithfulness,
It pines, and withers to the ground.

Those once repulsed, meet as of old,
The charm is flown, their words are vain,
For as for love, when once its cold
It's never quite itself again.

JUNE

NOW comes the lovely summer scenes,
The leafy month of June,
When screen doors and window screens
Are in their fullest bloom.

When corn delights in the sort of nights
That girls kick off the clothes,
The mosquito's wing foretells his sting
And breaks their sweet repose.

When the farmer doth for want of breath
Pulls off his boots and hose,
And at his work through dust and dirt,
Most cheerily he goes.

When night has come and prayers are done,
He creeps beneath the sheet
But his old frau kicks up a row,
And makes him wash his feet.

Then down the stairs a swearing prayers,
And thus he frees his mind,
If this is the pay I get when I pray,
I'll try the other kind.

"AN ADIEU TO MY HOME"

COLDLY the breath of the March wind is blowing,
Dim burns the lamp on the table near by,
Low murmurs the fire, its comfort bestowing
Yet how little heeded, so wretched am I.
Sadly I sit, my feet on the fender,
Recalling the friends that few could excel,
But ever anon comes a strain I remember,
As heard in my youth, "The Wanderer's Farewell."

Sad is my heart, my tears nearly falling,
For soon I must part from a long cherished home,
By an act of my own, I would not be recalling
But to sever the tie, cuts deep to the bone.
With manly endeavor I try to surmount it
And think of the joys of which other folks tell,
But home-sick and heart-sick however I count it,
No words seem so sad as a solemn farewell.

Here's where for twenty long years I have tarried,
Years frought with pleasure, though sprinkled with pain;
Home of my bride when first we were married
Cemented by ties we shall know not again.

Here's where the sun has shone on us brightly,
What the future may bring us no mortal can tell,
And yet while I ponder comes that sad line so lightly
As sang by my teacher, "The Wanderer's Farewell."

Here's where I've watched the growth of my children,
Their sweet sunny faces, and light flaxen hair;
Happy my heart as often I've held them
Now grown from my lap and gone from my care.
Yet while I live, my wish will be ardent
With hope for their welfare, my bosom will swell,
But think as I may, that strain is still present,
Adieu, my dear mountain, "The Wanderer's Farewell."

Many and many long miles have I wandered
For the sake of some fancy, for the sake of some friend,
Musing with pleasure as sweet thoughts I've pondered
But time brings its changes and here it must end.
Faces, and places, how soon we must sever,
I turn from your portal 'mid strangers to dwell;

But one little joy will remain with me ever,
In mind lives the music, "The Wanderer's
Farewell."

AH, NA! I CANNA GANG WI YE

AH, dearie, why will ye ask me this?
Ye ken my ain temptations strang,
And when I see ye'er bonny face
I canna keep from gieing wrang.
Right weel ye ken my heart is thine,
For what ye've been and are to me
Warlds wod I gie if ye were mine,
And yet I canna gang wi ye.

Ye tare my heart to ask sic things,
And where's the proof ye'd haud ye'er vow?
How do I ken but ye'd leave me then,
Just as ye'd leave anither now?
'Tis then sma comfort should I take.
Better bide til' we are free,
Maybe ye'll find some ither luv,
Ah, na! I canna gang wi ye.

If flowery banks our feet should tread
And ye to me were always kind,
Yet often would sad thoughts return
Of the bonny bairns we'd left behind.

And if in sorrow I returned,
  My friends would sairly glower on me,
The grave must be my resting then!
  Ah, na! I canna gang wi ye.

"FAIR JENNIE"

I LOVE to stand upon the beach
  Where tides do ebb and flow;
I love to watch the drifting sails
  While passing to and fro.
I love to see the dashing waves,
  Their lace-like crest to trace,
But dearer to me than sail, or sea,
  Is the sight of Jennie's face.

I love when Winter days are passed
  And comes the budding Spring,
The feathered warblers come at last,
  Their sweetest notes to sing
So charming to their little mates,
  Which bids my heart rejoice;
Yet there can be no charm for me
  Like that of Jennie's voice.

I love to feel in gentle June's
  Fair evening, mild and meek,
The breath of many a flower's perfume
  Come wafted on my cheek,

Charged with the sweetest nectar
The honey maker sips;
But sweeter far than evening air
Is the touch of Jennie's lips.

I have been in halls of splendor,
Where mirth and pleasure meet,
I have lain in bowers of fariest flowers
I've drank my fill complete
Of all the joys this world affords
Or ever can bestow,
I'd rather be by Jennie's side
Than anywhere I know.

"JINNY JIMPS"

AND often to my vision still,
Clad in her sweetest dress of prints,
And walking down to the woolen mill
Her daily round ten hours to fill
By hard-earned means to pay each bill,
I seem to see poor Jinny Jimps.

All that you are or hope to be
Until of death you have a glimpse,
In trials or prosperity
So steadfast has she stood by thee
When others fail, so firm was she
You owe to Jinny Jimps.

Ofttimes I see her seated there,
Mid cloth, and noise, and thread, and lints,
With cheek more pale and face less fair,
Which tells of vital wear and tear.
For Heaven's sake take better care
Or lose poor Jinny Jimps.

Though trouble oft beset your path
Where duty calls, pray never winee;
Woe flies from mirth like driven chaff,
Be careful of your better-half.
But live in love, and sing, and laugh,
With your forgiving Jinny Jimps.

"WHITE APRONED SUSIE"

THE Court's adjourned, the Judge has arisen,
A solemn stillness fills the place
Where many a verdict and sentence given,
Has printed woe on many a face.
Many there be have gone to ruin,
In consequence of evil doing.

How many before this Bar have come,
With hope and expectation high,
Have watched till all was said and done,
Then saw their cherished object die.
And left them naught but grief and pain
Where certain pleasure should remain.

And why should I still lingering be?
No court's decree has given me woe;
A wife and home awaits for me,
Then why should I be loth to go?
Alas, it is no great surprise,
'Tis but a glance of Susie's eyes.

My thoughts I have not told at large
And tried to act a manly part
But stronger than the Judge's charge,
Is Susie's image on my heart.
And when I chance to meet her eye
My warm heart's blood just leaps for joy.

I had supposed Love's foolish rage,
Long, long were dead, or ceased to be,
In one whose circumstance and age,
Proclaimed impossibility.
And is it wrong to love the flowers
We must not pluck or call them ours?

Now reason bids me leave the place,
Where fain I would be lingering yet,
O would I could behold that face,
Once more, I must so soon forget.
Though home is not what it was to me,
Yet still a faithful man I'll be.

We oft deceive ourselves, I know,
And think another heart more warm

Than that we won so long ago,
Whose patient hands much toil have borne
And oft predict a model wife,
Who leads some man a wretched life.

And now sweet Susie, fare thee well,
Perhaps we ne'er shall meet again,
May peace and pleasure with thee dwell
Nor sorrows tear thy lashes stain,
And may never man as years go by
Have worse design on you than I.

"OH! WHAT WILL OUR LAST PARTING BE"

OH! what will our last parting be?
So sighed the lovers as they cooed,
While some gallant swain, his sweetheart wooed,
With feelings of intensity,
Oh! what will our last parting be?

Oh! what will our last parting be?
So said the husband to the wife,
While journeying on in peaceful life,
How little of the future see,
Oh! what will our last parting be?

Oh! what will our last parting be?
It may be months, it may be years,
It may be fraught with grief and tears,

It may be you, it may be me,
Oh! what will our last parting be?

Oh! what will our last parting be?
So has said many a friend to friend;
What meeting here, but here must end,
When time is changed for eternity,
That's when, will our last parting be.

"ADOLPH'S ADIEU TO ROSA"

LOW sinks the silent, setting sun,
That gilds the hills with a golden hue,
His last fond rays on earth are flung
As if to say "my favored one,"
Then disappears with dewey tears
He weeps to bid the world adieu.

The full round moon her light displayed
From the eastern hill, o'er lake and dell
When, to a silent, sylvan shade
A pair on whom restraint was laid
Came wandering there, e'er sundered were
Their vows to plight and say farewell.

"Can yon pale moon, with face so pure
Look from her distant place of rest
And know the hopes how insecure
The secret pain that hearts endure
Would she not then her pity lend
Or feel for our distress?"

"And when our ways are severed wide
Those rays will fall on you and me
Though waters deep between us glide
In thy true heart I will confide,
And nothing ever, but thyself can sever,
My faith and trust in thee."

"But, Rosa, when I'm far from here,
And many miles we are apart,
Then think of me as ever near,
Near to thee, because thou art dear,
Dear to me, thou wilt ever be
And dwell within my heart."

"But should temptation thee beset,
With firmness walk in Virtue's ways,
By one wrong act, the cheeks are wet
Death often comes, by one false step
Some of the fairest birds this world affords
Are birds of prey."

"Soon will these earthly scenes be o'er.
Does there exist a fairer clime,
Where true hearts meet to part no more
And know each, as known before,
Where a social life begets no strife
And love is not a crime?"

"Ah! Rosa dear, forbear to mourn,
A heart like thine, no grief should know.

The tide of fate we cannot turn;
Mistakes are easier made than borne;
Farewell, adieu, I will think of you,
Where e'er I go."

"IDLE MUSINGS"

ON SEEING A NEW FACE IN A LAWYER'S OFFICE

DEAR Mrs. ———, where are you from,
And what was your name before marriage?
I am charmed with your ways, and sweet winning face,
Your demeanor, and beautiful carriage.

There once was a time, when I was in prime,
I struck out to be an attorney,
But becoming disgusted with things I had trusted
Deserted before half on my journey.

But had I have known, what since has been shown,
I really had been more persistent,
I would allied my cause with justice and laws
With you for my office assistant.

As clients came in, of course we should win
For victory would crown our endeavor,

Our wealth be increased by victims we'd fleeced;
We would have been very happy together.

If stern reverse should make matters worse,
And I was to poverty nearing,
I should never fret with vain, foolish regret,
Blest with company ever endearing.

'Tis exceedingly strange that all things must change,
No power whatever can stop it,
Time, changes will bring to most everything,
But no change I find in my pocket.

And here it would seem I must finish my theme,
The facts in the matters supplying,
I have greatest respect for all of thy sex,
But for none would I ever be sighing.

THANKS FOR A BOOK FROM A FUTURE SON-IN-LAW

ACCEPT my thanks, respected friend,
For that little book of poems,
Thou didst to me so kindly send,
My love for poesy knowing.
In some book, somewhere, sometime, we learn
Bread cast on waters without concern
After many days, it will return
A reward to giver's showing.

Now well 'tis known, should we all live
And at no distant time
That I to you a gift must give
'Twill far outrival thine.
To have and to hold while life endures,
Whether weal or woe the same secures
And may you be content with yours
As I'm content with mine.

"MY FAIR LOUISA"

A FIG for the comfort of fond recollection,
Of faces and forms we never more see,
When passing before us in the grand retrospection,
How vividly comes Louisa to me.

Her blue loving eyes, words fail to express;
Her white throat and chin with snow might compare,
With the sweetest red lips that man's ever pressed,
Her cheeks like blush roses, and light golden hair.

Her form so exquisite and full rounded waist
A Venus might covet, if once she should see;
I fondly admired, and kindly caressed
For dear as the light was Louisa to me.

How vivid the scene to memory depicted,
The sweet foolish pleasure forgotten should be
When from the mirror our forms were reflected,
Embracing each other, Louisa and me.

But there came a time when there came another,
When I was rejected and favored was he,
Who stole the rose, the false-hearted lover,
And thereby was severed Louisa and me.

But long years have passed, since we last parted,
And I perhaps forgotten may be,
But deep in my heart, tho' she was false-hearted,
Remains a kind wish for Louisa from me.

"A JOURNEY FROM HOME"

A letter written after leaving home on business, which required an absence of several months. October 1st, 1903.

DEAR ones at home, I thought it best,
To drop a line at this early date,
Thereby to set your minds at rest
If you felt a fear for my journey's fate.
Though a cheerful guise I did display,
I was very loth to come away.

There is a fact you may depend,
A most uncommon circumstance,

When a man is so taken with a friend,
As to go and leave his Sunday pants,
Though seeming a little out of place,
It might perhaps have been the case.

Now for your pardon I must plead,
For recollect I am but human,
And the greatest thing I seem to need
Is the company of some pleasant woman.
Not all of such as smirk and smile,
But those whose acts are free from guile.

But should a siren wave her wand,
Or sing in sweet angelic strain,
Like old Ulysses I would stand,
And like Artemus Ward exclaim,
"Ever to thee I'll constant be, O, Betsy Jane,"
My sentiment the same would be, except the name.

Dear little wife, it seems of late,
I have much reason to rejoice,
Were I again to choose a mate,
I could not improve upon my choice;
You are but one, yet I confess
I'd not give that one for all the rest.

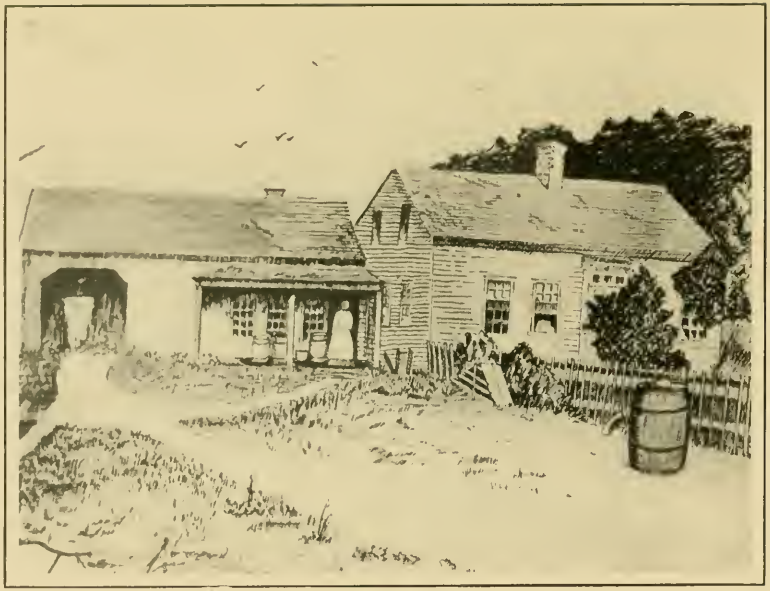
I was going to tell of my journey here,
It's of small moment, let the sequel prove,
And when in rhyme, it would appear
My amorous muse goes chasing love,
She sometimes sings of other things,
But delights in flights on Cupid's wings.

I passed the old homestead, my dear,
Where you and I for many a day,
Month after month, year after year,
Toiled on, that mortgage debt to pay.
Long, long, I looked while passing by,
Until a moisture filled my eye.

I seemed to see you just as then,
Out on the old piazza stand;
The chicken brood, the mother hen,
The barrel, the coop, the pails, the pans,
The light-haired baby, and my little son,
Watching to see their papa come.

But things are greatly changed, my dear,
Like a tale that's told, or a song that's sung,
Familiar faces disappear
And we, alas, no more are young.
The sight is dimmed, the hair grows gray
And the bird we loved has flown away.

And still we're drifting year by year,
We are drawing near that hidden stream,
Where all mistakes lie buried there,
Nor one regrets what might have been.
It matters not when the summons come,
If we can but go with all duty done.



"I seemed to see you just as then"

THAT SWEET SYRINGA

CAN I forget, can I forget
That beautiful night when first we met,
When side by side we fondly sat
Till time to death shall bring me?
Th' approving stars looked smiling down,
And all seemed wrapped in sleep profound,
Our softest seats, the grateful ground
Beneath that sweet Syringa.

The old good man was fast asleep,
From cozy coops the chickens peeped,
While the marm did a vigil keep
From her bed room near the entry.
When two true hearts with love grown bold
In spite of dampness, dew, or cold,
Their joys and sorrows there they told
Beneath that sweet Syringa.

In whispered words so soft and clear
Like music met my eager ear,
And clasp of hands made doubly dear
In ecstacy to wing me.
Each flowret dropped a petal fair,
Which alighted on her golden hair,
That seemed to give a welcome there
Beneath that sweet Syringa.

There's a charm in that Syringa tree
No other can ever have for me

However long this life may be
And sorrows oft may wring me.
I passed that lovely bush of late
And from its bough did a blossom take;
I kissed it for sweet memory's sake
When 'neath that sweet Syringa.

Could I but choose the spot and time,
When I this mortal life resign,
And look my last on friends of mine,
What comfort would it bring me!
On that dear breast my head could lie,
And feel her soothing presence nigh,
I'd close my eyes and say good-bye
Beneath that sweet Syringa.

"REUBEN AND ROSE"

YE victims of Cupid come give your attention,
A bit of true history to you I'll disclose;
It is no mystic fable of the poet's invention,
But of two loyal lovers called Reuben and Rose;
We know there's a maxim of long years' duration
Tho' its use far as comfort I cannot approve,
Which says there's a clause in the plan of creation
Declaring that "true love never runs smooth."

Another old adage which seems true as ever,
Says "Deepest of waters always runs still."
The love of our Reuben was the deep rolling river,
And that of his Rose was the rattling rill;
Now Reuben was honest, and kind and warm-hearted,
More fixed in his purpose than most of such men,
Had met many sweethearts, from many had parted,
But none was so dear as his Rose of The Glen.

A man of good morals, although he was human,
A once given promise, he would not recall,
With trust in his Maker, and also in woman,
Yet those that trust strongest are surest to fall;
Nearly five years they were lovers together,
In the strongest of language that flows from the heart,
So often had promised to be true to each other,
Till the cold hand of Death should cause them to part.

And many, and often, sweet letters she sent him,
Of deepest affection and plighting her faith,
Imploring the aid of high Heaven to bless him,
And signed "Ever lovingly, Your's until Death."

How pleasantly flitted each dew dropping evening,
The footfall of Reuben how quickly she knew,
With a kiss at the window, their pent love relieving,
And blessing each other, for each one was true.

Yet there are times in the lives of but few men,
In the best of endeavor there will something oppose,
And gladly would Rose have married her Reuben,
As gladly would Reuben have wed with his Rose;
Some gave as a reason why they did not marry,
That she in the past to another'd been wed,
By the pure law of prudence, which caused them to tarry,
Tho' long years had passed since she heard he was dead.

There's a mound in the meadow, way down in the corner,
Where the shade of a tree breaks the rays of the sun,
There under the greensward, where nothing can harm her,
In ashes resposes a dear little one;
We all have possessions in memory's corner,
Some place more endearing than others can be;

It may be a spot where friends part from each other,
An oath, or a promise, or a grave 'neath a tree.

Well, I am digressing; my subject renewing,
It shall all be unravelled in time I propose;
Where did we leave Reuben? the theme still pursuing,
He stands by the window a kissing his Rose;
Perhaps at this time were a favorable moment
A word for sweet Rose were not out of place,
Her form and her ways needed no critic's comment,
While her beauty and excellence shone in her face.

Her eyes were as bright as the stars of the morning
And soft as the fawns' that feed by the rill,
Her skin was as pure as the white lily dawning,
Her breath was as sweet as the breeze from the hill.
Her hair, Oh! ye gods, how can I express it?
Reflecting the tints of the sunsetting ray,
More precious than riches to the one who possessed it,
A charm, an attraction, from which none could stray.
A nose quite exquisite, though modest and shapely,
A throat, alabaster, of color the same,

Her sweet ruby lips that smiled so completely
No lips ever pressed them but wished to again.
If you think that her beauty is an overdrawn picture,
When I tell you the secret it need not surprise,
We all fall in error by fancy's conjecture
But remember, I see her as with Reuben's eyes.

And usually some little token he'd bring her
Which afforded her pleasure whenever he came;
He sang of her praises, though not a great singer,
With joy, swelled his heart at the sound of her name.

When some sweet appointed night arrived,
What deep devotion his senses stir
Along some shaded way to drive,
And sing the song he had made for her.

"Somebody's coming when the dew-drops fall"
Somebody's coming whom I will not call,
Somebody's coming I love best of all
Someone I'm longing to see.

When the twilight shadows are exchanged for night,
And the pretty stars give forth their soft pure light,
Lonely, I'm watching by my window, quite
With a welcome for my darling from me.

Oh! the greeting of that fond meeting
What happiness can compare,
Oh! the bliss of that rapturous kiss
A kiss at the window there.

Ah! had we the power to now draw the curtain
And leave our fond lovers to their season of bliss,
There never had been one ruined life certain
And never had been told a story like this;
Fairest of prospects may fade in a moment
Brightest of mornings may sunset in gloom,
The flowers of to-day, so fair, sweet, and fragrant,
At night may be withered, and wasted their bloom.

And thus through our life, whatever our object,
For innocent pleasure or comfort it bring,
Like children pursuing some gold-tinted insect
When caught are repaid by a sharp painful sting;
One night on his pillow poor Reuben lay sleeping,
A deep voice of warning disturbed his repose;
It was no voice of man, but a spirit seemed speaking,
Saying, "Reuben, Oh! Reuben, you're betrayed by your Rose."

He straightway awoke like one that's been sleeping
Yet still could but list for a step in the hall,
But nothing he heard but his pulse's strong beating,
And the clock on the mantle shelf close to the wall.
"Ah! why was this seeming, and why this about her?
And why with such fancies my memory fill?
Her virtue, and goodness, forbid me to doubt her;
Begone, vain delusion, I sure never will."

Now scoff, unbelievers, and cry superstition,
And say that with Reuben 'twas an overcharged brain,
But who's not dreamed dreams, and seen apparitions
For warnings of sorrow they cannot explain?
Yet while he lay musing and trying to forget it
A brightness appeared as of Heaven's own light,
He saw not the source nor the hand that had set it
While a large brazen tablet appeared to his sight.

And there he saw written in words plain as speaking,
His poor heart ceased beating, his blood almost froze,

The very same language of the voice still repeating
"Reuben, Oh! Reuben, you're betrayed by your Rose."
Then came an impression from some unknown power,
"If you would be certain before you believe,
Go see for yourself, I will give you the hour,
To prove the deceiver may yet be deceived."

Did he go? yes, he went by the spirit's directing,
I call it a spirit, for I know not its name;
Ah! better that Reuben had died unsuspecting
Or finished his days in a place for insane.
There are times in our lives if memory were blotted
Reflection could cease, or reason could die,
Then happy our days, the short time allotted,
Now the dead and the living together must lie.

What he saw let nothing on earth e'er reveal it
Till shown in the morn of the great judgment light;
Let Heaven and Earth conspire to conceal it
Till lost in the depths of Eternity's night.
He straightway returned in this doleful condition,
Tho' pale was his visage, no tear dimmed his eye.

But sent her a letter with no other inscription,
With those three simple words, "Rose, Good-bye."

* * * * * * * *

Morn or noon or night were nothing,
Cold or hunger gave no pain,
With a weary, wakeful, woeful, wanting,
And then he sang in a different strain.

"Oh! ye source of sorrow springing
Dearest charms to bosoms bringing,
Fond affections closely clinging
Till torn apart,
Then all that's dear goes out by wringing
A broken heart."

"I had a sweetheart it appears
Who shared my love alone for years,
My life, my light, and all that cheers
For many a day
She filled my bleeding heart with tears,
She went astray."

"It has surpassed all human art
To describe the tearing of heart from heart,
And who ever feels its dreadful smart
God pity those.
The time has come when we must part,
Good-bye my Rose."

"How labored came my heated breath,
A gloomy darkness filled the earth
In womankind I had lost my faith,
Yes, every one;
I hated life and longed for death,
It would not come."

"But I will not dwell on those doleful things,
A sense of sorrow to my mind it brings
Like the icy hand on the tender strings
When death lays hold,
And purple drops from the heart it wrings
With fingers cold."

* * * * * * * *

At length came a letter to Reuben directed,
Saying, "Reuben, dear Reuben, of thee I implore
I am sick on my bed, I am almost distracted,
Pray grant me one favor, if none ever more;
My case is so bad I have called in the Doctor
A shock to my nerve is the reason he gives,
Come once more to see me on a business matter
And God he will bless you as long as you live."

Then Reuben he read it with eyes almost bursting
His heart beat so loud as to resound in his ears,

Down deep in his heart, love and reason were striving
And slow down his cheeks rolled two crystal like tears.
So Reuben he went with her many sweet letters
And thought to exchange and have all things fair,
Yet when he arrived he found she was better
But grew violently worse when she knew he was there.

"Oh! Reuben," she cried, "Oh! how I have missed you
And what was the cause of that letter 'Good-bye'?
Come here to me darling, I so long to kiss you
Without your affection I surely must die."
"Ah! Rose, then he answered, "to me you're unfaithful
You have broken your promise in a dangerous way,
I own that I love you, and have ever been truthful
But God and my honor forbid me to stay."

She screamed and she wept like poor Dona Julia,
At the words of Don Alphonso, her face all aflame

Saying, "I've not wronged you Reuben, now
honest and truly,"
Calling God and high Heaven to witness the
same;
Poor Reuben he gazed with conflicting emotion
For what he had seen he very well knew,
While there lay his Rose with seeming devotion
And swearing by Heaven that she had beeen
true.

"Rose," then he said, "to you I've been faithful
No man ever worshiped, as I've worshiped
you;
How could you find heart to have been so un-
grateful
To repaid my devotion by an act so untrue?
Never have ever you asked my assistance
But if in my power I as willingly gave;
You were my life, my soul, my existence,
And I in return was your poor willing slave."

"You are harsh to me Reuben, and wrongly ac-
cuse me,
Not even the hand of another I've pressed
No one has come near me, you shamefully abuse
me
Sometime you'll regret it in sorrow I guess."
Her sickness subsided, she arose from her pillow,
And then with great vim, raised her hand
towards the skies;

"God knows that I'm innocent, whatever may
follow,
Someone's filled your head with a torrent of
lies."

"Not so," then he answered, "I know more
than you think for
I know your proceedings, on that you depend
If it wan't for one sorrow my soul still must
mourn for
You might go to perdition, and here it would
end."
Then said she, "Dear Reuben, I will now tell you
certain
If you have been watching when some other
came
Some things may have happened there's really
no hurt in
I being mistaken could not be to blame."

"And this was the way, but no more can he do it
I heard a low tapping and thought it was you.
I opened the door and before that I knew it
Straight in he came walking, then what could
I do?
I thought of you darling all the while he was
with me
And grieved for your feelings should you ever
know this;
I felt like one dazed or that reason had left me,
And never but once did I give him a kiss."

Then after much talk and many wrong stories,
She confessed her fault fully, that's better untold,
And Reuben he pitied from a pure sense of sorrow
While tears from her sad swollen eyes downward rolled.
Saying, "Reuben, Oh! Reuben, for God's sake don't leave me,
I will take my own life if you won't forgive.
No more will I wrong you, no more I'll deceive thee
If you can't forgive me, I don't want to live."

Then said he to Rose, "If you will go with me
To a little green grave, just over the hill,
There answer the questions of which I do wish thee,
As long as you're faithful, God knows that I will."
Then out in the darkness with sad solemn stillness
They wended their way over uneven ground,
In the damp of the dews and the autumn night's chillness
On their knees they sought out that dear little mound.

"Oh! Rose," he exclaimed in a voice by grief, broken,
While tears down his pale face fell fast as the dew,

"I've led you to this place as a sign and a token
Before God and Heaven your oath to renew."
"Dear Reuben," she said, "I think it is awful
A promise to make by the grave of the dead,
But to you I do promise to be true and loyal,
Till the clods of the valley are over my head."

And there by that mound in the deep hush of darkness
He called upon spirits departed before,
To witness the scene and take note of her promise
Through every temptation to be true evermore.
"Oh! Reuben, my darling, the truth I'm confessing
In ways of deceit I was always inclined;
From the sad sorry past I have learned a good lesson,
Which nothing but Death can efface from my mind."

"My Reuben, my dearest, will you but believe me?
I have no fault to find but to me you've been true;
No more will I wander, no more will deceive thee
This heart in my bosom beats only for you."
With kisses, and tears, and many embraces,
They silently quitted the abode of the dead;
It were easier far with the stars to change places,
Than to turn one false heart from a life they have led.

Concerning this story of which we've been spinning,
There's a thousand and one cases a spinner could spin,
Which plainly sets forth the caprice of women
And also bespeaks the forbearance of men.
If God fashioned women, which no one must doubt it
Whether he did the moulding or had it in charge,
Had he given more reason, while he was about it,
'Twould have been infinitely better for the public at large.

Now who'd ever think after all this transaction
Her oath by that grave, and where Reuben forgave,
That ever again she would have sought satisfaction
In error and falsehood so long as she lived?
We know it is said of our Heavenly Father,
"His ways are not man's," and are "past finding out"
Now many a woman is their Father's own daughter
And resemble their parent in this wise no doubt.

A third of a year had scarce turned an angle
When again he saw reason to be on his guard,

When he mentioned the subject she flew in a
wrangle
And said his opinion was really too hard.
"I am true to you Reuben, you've no reason to
doubt me,
For no other one I am wishing at all,
You would have me imprisoned with no one
about me
In a room all secure by a four-sided wall."

"Get rid of your nonsense, you know that I love
you,
You have been to me Reuben what no other
can be;
I love you as truly as God reigns above you
As when we stood under that Sycamore Tree.
When you go from me darling, do try to be
happy,
For you know that your Rose is as true as the
Sun;
Give yourself no more trouble, no other can have
me,
But will welcome you, darling, whenever you
come."

But just a few days from the scene last depicted,
Poor Reuben, he went on one cold Winter
night
To the home of his Rose, when least was ex-
pected;
Cold blew the wind, and the Moon hid her
light.

There was a light in the parlor, or what you may
call it,
Softly he crept through loud creaking snow;
He peeped through the curtain, Oh, how can I
tell it?
Oh! ye gods of pity, your pity bestow.

For there sat his Rose all dressed fine and neatly,
And close by her side lay a hard visaged chap
Stretched out on the sofa at ease most com-
pletely,
With his eyes partly closed, and his hand on
her lap.
Now what can we say for the feelings of
Reuben?
Shall we say he was angry, or there went in-
sane?
Oh, no, he kept quiet and kept from intruding
Till his face was discovered through a low
window pane.

And these were his thoughts while his long vigil
keeping,
No feeling of malice, to his rival, he bore him
But felt a contempt for a man nearly sleeping
With such a display of beauty before him.
He gazed on her head, her neck, and her
shoulder,
Her rich heaving bosom, and well-rounded
arms;

His heart swelled with pride as in thinking it over,
That he as her Reuben, had once shared those charms.

Cold grows the night, and midnight approaches
And Rose is aware that her Reuben's around;
Still striving to see her, each crevice he searches
Till head sick and heart sick he falls to the ground.
Poor Rose now thinking she could no nothing better
In convincing her Reuben of what she had said
Of her faithfulness, brought forth a box of his letters
And in silence sat down by her table and read.

Her new acquisition arose from the sofa
In the midst of the floor had taken a chair,
Paying no more attention to Rose than as if she
Had been a stone statue, or had not been there.
In one room stood a mirror in such a condition
It showed every motion in the parlor displayed,
As seen from the window of Reuben's position
No light from the table his presence betrayed.

Now Reuben, he wishing his Rose could be certain,
And know for herself, he was there at the place,

When she came to the window and peeped through the curtain,
Oh! merciful Heavens, there was Reuben's cold face.
She said not a word, but as quick, turned and left him
Nor made the least sign she had seen anyone;
He stood like a statue with reason bereft him
And this is the welcome he met when he come.

Then when he recovered he looked at the mirror
His rival had arisen and there stood erect;
His Rose she ran to him with no look of sorrow
And with fondest embrace threw her arms round his neck.
The lights were turned down, the windows were darkened,
And nothing was heard but soft steps on the floor
He learned her deceit, for closely he hearkened;
"False Rose, you will see your dear Reuben no more."

I've told you this story almost verbatim
As I understood it from those that should know;
Which shows that poor Reuben met a terrible fate, in
Bestowing his affection on an object so low.
But "Love it is blind" wise ones have repeated
And never was sentence more true ever spoken,

There's many a true heart destined to be cheated
And a heart that loves blindly deserves to be broken.

But the world moves along, for time never tarried,
And babes will be born, to manhood will grow,
Fall in love, get rejected, or worse perhaps, married,
But death is the balm for all sorrow and woe.
What did you ask about Reuben? There's not much more to it,
But this is the story with its sad, tragic end,
Could I vouch for its trueness, I gladly would do it,
But on what we hear now days we cannot depend.

But here is the tale as told by some hunters;
'Twas on one morning in November, I think,
They started out early, with their guns, and their pointers,
In quest of some foxes, some musk rats, or mink.
They crossed a high bridge and up by a cottage
Which stands by the site of an old ancient mill
They passed through a bar-way and thru' a small orchard
At length reached the top of a quaint little hill.

There down in the Glen were the walls of a
garden,
Some old buildings, in ruins, and a lane to a
field
Where children had played and men had worked
hard in
And women had sang to the time of their
wheel.
The sun from the East shed its beams most de-
lightful
And cool from the mount came the crisp morn-
ing breeze
When one of them spake in tones almost frightful
"Great Heavens! What's there down under
those trees?"

They quickly descended and there to their
horror
Near a mound nearly covered with snow, frost,
and hail,
They looked at each other with feelings of sor-
row,
'Twas the form of poor Reuben cold, ghastly,
and pale.
In his hand closely clasped, in his bosom re-
posing,
Was a letter which moved by his last heaving
breath
When opened and read, its author disclosing;
Signed, "Your Own Loving Rose, Yours until
Death."

So this was the end of his journeyings here;
As they gazed on his pale face, they could but wonder why
Of all the places his heart most held dear
By this lonely grave he should lay down to die.
Did they bury him there? No, not's I recall it,
He sleeps by a stream on a far distant plain
And sweet be his slumber with nothing to spoil it
And no one betray his affections again.

At rest is that heart, where no sound e'er can move him,
He heeds not the sigh of the sad breezes breath
As it steals through the leaves of the branches above him
And seemingly whispers, "Yours until Death."

"THE NOBLEMAN'S CHOICE"

(SONG)

THE Queen of Fashion, there she stands,
With simpering smiles, your flattering words she hears,
With all the gloss wealth can command,
A bird in gaudy plumage, she appears,
You think perchance her loving glance
Is just for you, and you alone,
But here you make a grand mistake
Another shares it soon as you are gone.

But come with me to a country wild,
Where the God of Nature, knows no gilded art,
'Tis here you'll see fair Nature's child,
With naught of riches, but a guileless heart.
Her eyes the hue of Heaven's blue
With no deceit or pretense there
Sweet as the flowers, she sports among
Whose tints reflect her lips and golden hair.

Why was I doomed to such a fate?
Though with an ample fortune I was blest,
To love a maiden of low estate
Where education never was a guest.
My friends around will on me frown
And pass me coldly by I know,
But a loving heart in a cotton gown
Is a better prize than riches can bestow.

TO MRS. MARY E. BABCOCK

FOR A CHRISTMAS PRESENT

MANY thanks my dear Mrs. B.,
For the pretty present you sent to me,
For such a gift received from thee,
I regard with signal honor,
For that the thought it doth impart
Almost a stranger tho' thou art
Still it would seem within thy heart
I hold "a cozy corner."

With home and husband may you rejoice
Of assorted pleasures have your choice,
May life flow sweetly like your voice,
  While seasons vary.
And may you never lack a friend,
At any time, till time shall end
And many a happy Christmas spend
  And every one be merry, Mary.

"THE MAID WITH THE GOLDEN HAIR"

HOW brightly beams the morning rays,
  All Nature smiles anew,
  Each bud and leaf speak forth their praise
  In crystal drops of dew.
The grassy mead, the forest wide,
  And fields so fresh and fair,
But fairer far than all beside
  Is the maid with the golden hair.

Sweet singing birds and busy bee
  Awake at early morn,
And gaily flit from flower and tree
  Rejoiced at its return,
And thus declare their love of light
  As o'er the hills they fly,
But the dearest light that greets my sight
  Is the love-light of her eye.

The blushing rose, sweet modest flower,
Sleeps sweetly all the night,
But early wakes at morning hour
To greet the Prince of light;
Each tiny petal kissed with dew
The morning light disclose,
I would I were a dew drop
And she that blushing rose.

How sweetly breathes the morning air
Adown the woody dell,
And into many a listening ear,
Sweet words of comfort tell,
Inspiring all with radiant hope
That Life has just begun,
While I for this one little kiss
Shall perish with the Sun.

"REGRET"

MY Maggie was a charming "gal,"
Few, if any, I trow could beat her
When we married, I loved her so well
I felt that I could eat her.

But eyes of love are a little blind
Sweetest fruits sometimes turn bad
Now when recalling some things to mind
I wished to the Powers I had.

"BLUE BERRIES BLUE"

OH, blueberries blue! my heart yearns for you,
Your pies it is true are good licking,
Yet not for the use that is made of your juice,
But for an excuse for the picking.

Oh! blueberries blue! what shall I pursue
When your numbers are few like my virtues?
I will sing of your praise, in sweetest of lays,
And ne'er a tale raise that can hurt you.

Oh! blueberries blue! when comes to my view,
Your sky colored hue 'mong the leaves,
I shall think of a sweet so full and complete
Yet not made to eat if you please.

Oh! blueberries blue! when cooking you stew,
With each breath I drew, brought a smell,
Let a smile wreath my face as my steps I retrace,
To a time and a place I won't tell.

Oh! blueberries blue! in fullness you grew,
Then fade like the dew of the morn,
To quite a degree you resemble me,
For alas we can't see why we're born.

Oh! blueberries blue! our days are but few,
How little we know what's before,
You are eaten straightway or fall to decay,
While my useful day is soon o'er.

Oh! blueberries blue! I'm indebted to you,
For joys not a few in the past,
So join me in hand, the fruit, and the man,
To make life what we can while it lasts.

Oh! blueberries blue! I must bid you adieu,
Of my picking I'm through and my pleasure,
But one little lass, as the time went past,
Wished it might last forever.

God bless us forever, for all good endeavor,
While voyaging together this weary world through,
But until in death laid, or my memory fade,
I will think of the maid, and the blueberries blue.

MY PRETTY WHITE ROSE

BRIGHT comes the morn with its gay spangled splendor
Preceding the march of the Monarch of Day.
Warming and charming, with rich rays to render;
Till wearied of earth he hastens away.
The Queen of the Night is even more fickle,
An hour ever late when the sun seeks repose,
The clock on the mantel wants changing a little
And nothing seems true but my pretty White Rose.

What is man's word, but a breath briefly spoken?
What is a vow, oft a lip lisping lie?
Promises made are easily broken,
Deceived and deceiver alike fade and die.
Husbands and wives grow estranged to each other,
Lovers change sweethearts when e'er they propose.
This heart in my bosom shall cherish none ever,
But Rosa, my darling, my pretty White Rose.

Ah, tell me sweet Rose, for the time is fast flying,
Does the distance grow greater between you and me?
Is not there one ray for a soul sorely sighing
With deepest devotion, dear Rosa, for thee?
The Queen of the Night, though tardy and fickle,
Looks calmly and bright on a worm in repose.
Oh, grant me thy smile, though seemingly little,
It's a world unto me, my pretty White Rose.

TO JULIA

AH, Julia, This I wish to know
Before love's lane I longer tread,
Why is it thus you treat me so,
So high and haughty hold your head?
It was but a short time ago,
You cared for only me, you said.

But now before my thoughts arise
Which almost seems to be the case,
A smaller man, with darker eyes,
Whom you prefer to take my place.
It's a poor chance to win a prize
With decision rendered before the race.

If poet Moore, with all the art
With which the ardent muse inspires,
Could not win and hold his Julia's heart
From gross deceit and wrong desires,
How can I hope with my poor part
To furnish fuel for failing fires.

If such the facts should prove to be,
I'll make no moan, I'll heave no sigh,
But God must judge 'twixt you and me,
Do as you please, I shall not die
Return the ring I gave to thee,
I ask no more but say "Good-by."

"THE LOVER'S QUARREL"

MY dearest Eliza, why are you persistent,
In doubting when lover was never more true?
I'm sure I should never call you inconsistent,
If constant to me, as I'm faithful to you.

Fair hopes of to-day will fade with the morrow,
Love but pretended, is useless and vain,
Lies and deception, bring nothing but sorrow,
As many a true heart has witnessed in pain.

By all that is good, Eliza, believe me,
If wrong was my purpose, you'd found long ago;
Through pretense of love, I would tried to deceive you,
Though the flower be attractive, the fruit is but woe.

You ask if I love you, but how can you know
When falsehood's so easy, and truth is so scarce;
I know that I'm erring, which fills me with woe,
Were I to deceive you, 'twould only be worse.

Not even a suitor in palmiest days,
When beauty and innocence were stamped on thy brow,
Ever loved you more fondly or gave you more praise,
That a distrusted lover bestows on you now.

How can you doubt me, and think of another?
One who will ever be nothing to me,
As long as the day and night kiss each other,
So long will my heart be faithful to thee.

But should the time come, I long have expected,
That I no more warmth, of love's sunshine shall feel,
O, think of me kindly, though I am rejected,
And pity the wound death only can heal.

MY HEART IS THERE

THE constant sun pursues his way
And balmy night succeeds the day,
The moon her silvery light displays,
O'er valley fair.
All sleepless on my bed I lay.
My heart's not there.

At morn I take my daily round
Of work, and yet I've often found
Myself stock still, in thoughts profound,
On what? or where?
Not digging in the senseless ground;
My heart's not there.

On Sunday, for the sake of speech,
I go to hear the preacher preach,
All due regard I give to each,
The sermon, hymn, and prayer,
Yet all seem far beyond my reach;
My heart's not there.

Strange it may seem, yet often when
I've listened to the talk of men,
Of what they've done, or where they've been,
'Midst scenes so rare;
'Tis as the cackling of a hen;
My heart's not there.

In converse with a lady friend,
My whole attention I seem to lend;
For no true man would thus offend,
For lack of eare;
Yet gladly hail the eoming end;
My heart's not there.

Oft a one I chance to meet
While passing through the busy street,
Whose winning way and eyes bespeak,
They've time to spare,
I pass them by with quiekening feet;
My heart's not there.

But there is one that greets my sight
In thoughts by day and dreams by night,
Whose winning ways and smiles so bright,
None can compare.
Though some may say it is not right,
My heart is there.

Ye Powers that be, protect, sustain
In virtue's ways, and keep from blame.
May blessings fall like summer rain,
On that head of silken hair.
Though parted thus we must remain,
My heart is there.

FAIR IMOGENE WAITING HER LOVER

HOW chill the wintry winds do blow!
Like an eternal stream of woe,
Driving the sifting, drifting snow
To a place of cover!
High in the loft close by the grating,
With anxious heart all palpitating,
Fair Imogene sat watching, waiting
Her absent lover.

"Where has he gone? What keeps him so?
He should have come long, long ago.
Has he forgot, or don't he know
I am so nigh?
But a little while can I remain;
My heart is sad and filled with pain;
A creeping chill goes through my frame.
The hours go by.

Yon pretty dove beside your mate
That dwell in love, may never fate
Cause you to sigh, and watch, and wait,
As it does me.
Low sinks the sun close o'er the hill,
Cold blows the wind, so dread and chill,
And yet I'm watching, watching still.
Where can he be?

My Bertrand dear, if you only knew
This heart of mine so firm and true,
That beats for you and only you,
  You would be here.
Again I look, again I wonder.
Why are you staying? In vain I ponder,
While silent down my cheeks meander
  The silent tear.

Late grows the hour. Night's coming on.
My hope, my light will soon be gone.
In tears and fears I'm left alone
  My homeward course to turn.
Two hours or more, here have I been
Now shaking, quaking in heart and limb.
O, could I hear one word from him
  My blood would warm!

Good-by, old tower, now I must leave thee.
Good-by, sweet dove, may love ne'er grieve thee.
Good-by, my own, though thou deceive me,
  I'll faithful prove.
No other love shall I ever know,
Or slightest joy can this world bestow.
But wandering, pondering, here below,
  A forsaken dove.

"MY IDEAL"

IT is truly said of the human race
In every land, in every place,
A desire alike in all we trace
A condition of the mind,
Which holds within the heart's embrace
A worship of some kind.

Some worship works their hands have done
Images of brass, or wood, or stone,
All senseless idols, deaf and dumb,
All vain, of course,
While some have deified the Sun
And might done worse.

For light, and warmth is a glorious boon,
And dead is the heart that has not known
Or prized the source of favors shown
Till time shall end.
For me, I'd sooner worship the Moon
The Lover's friend.

Some worship reptiles, beasts, and kings,
Which seems a satisfaction brings,
While others their affection clings,
To gods they never knew.
Ah! Woman, in place of all these things
I worship only you.

Yes, I adore Thee, heart and voice,
Man's greatest grief, or sweetest joys,
If this my future life destroys
  This course I take.
I think my God will forgive my choice.
  'Tis His best make.

"LOVE'S LANGUAGE"

(SONG)

WHY should my heart so yearn for thee?
  Like as a flower desires the Sun,
  Thy smile is warmth, and light to me
My fondest love, my only one.

In sun, or shade, or all that's dear,
  In everything thy form I see,
Thy presence pervades the atmosphere
  And fills my longing soul with thee.

I hear thy voice in cadence sweet
  E'en in the note of each bird that sings,
The sighing breeze or where waters leap
  In everything to my sense it brings.

Then tell me not, I must forget
  The die is cast, let come what will
Until my sun of life is set
  Remember this, I love you still.

"THANKS TO A LADY FOR AN INVITATION TO DINNER"

I AM afraid it's work you've made,
In asking me to dinner,
Yet those who heed another's need
Most surely are the winner.
Were I to slight, your kind invite,
I'd merit condemnation
Then how can I consistently
Refuse your invitation?

So when the clock holds up both hands,
Expressive of great wonder
Kindly thanking thee, at your board I'll be
Urged on by fiercest hunger.

"THE REASON"

WHAT fault is ours, and what's the cause?
We're what our Maker made us be,
Must we submit to man-made laws
Our right to love, and liberty?
Oh! how I hate this galling chain,
Could I my freedom once obtain
I would defy its power again
To the end of all eternity.

But stop, and think, says reason's voice,
Nor tax your soul, like tempests tossed
Your freedom means but another choice,
And ties are broken at a fearful cost.
It is but easy to be sighing
And new, for old loves to be trying
'Tis like a bird in freedom flying
When once its caught the charm is lost.

AT THE GRAVE OF A FRIEND

IT seems to me, if it could be
That we should meet to part no more
With my hand I'd set my spirit free,
And meet you on that other shore.
But ah, alas, when life is passed,
We know not what's beyond the river,
When cold's the clay, something seems to say
Good-by, Good-by forever.

"SORROWING"

WHAT can I do, what can I say?
Life seems o'ercast with a ghastly gloom,
There is nothing here, my heart to cheer,
O, dismal doom.

Each morn I rise, my haggard eyes,
Bespeak what sorrow fills my brain,

Each hour brings grief, with no relief,
I long for night again.

When day is fled I seek my bed,
If balmy sleep shall close my eyes,
Then in my dreams she with me seems,
Then awake to woe, and sighs;

So in this way from day to day,
My sorrow I live o'er and o'er,
And can it be there is for me,
No joy forever more?

Oft in my ear her voice I hear
In music sweet as a Heavenly chime,
Recalling the bliss and happiness,
That once were mine.

But I must now with submission bow,
In earth's embrace she is resting fast,
But I mourn her still as no other will
As long as life shall last.

MY JENNIE

"MY Jennie is a bonnie lass,
With eyes as bright as morning,
And soft brown hair a tangled mass,
Her pure white brow adorning."

The following poem was written as a reply to the verse above, which is a part of a poem which appeared in *The Vermont Tribune,* from the bard of North Springfield:

INSCRIBED TO THE BARD OF NORTH SPRINGFIELD

MY dear Mr. P. your poem I see
And prized it, as I have the many,
As true as you live, by description you give
I fell nearly in love with your Jennie.

Her face is so fair, her graces so rare,
Of faults she has scarcely any;
But one thing indeed, there seems to be need
Of a comb and brush for your Jennie.

Now dear Mr. P. don't tell this from me,
I'm so modest I never could own it,
But this I declare, about her "brown, tangled hair"
I wish you'd induce her to comb it.

"THE LOAFER'S STORY"

WE all were sitting at the station
Engaged in our usual occupation
With poor cigars and conversation.
When the "Two O'clock" hove in sight
From which before our observation
A stranger did alight.

Now it was an occasion mighty rare
For a stranger to be stopping there,
And so he got an ample share
Of overlooking.
As we wondered at what place, or where
He would be booking.

His clothes, though plain were neatly made,
His hair and beard were thickly grayed
While he his whole attention paid
To a little child.
As around the depot steps she played
He watched and smiled.

A hundred times I'd seen here there
And never thought her overly fair;
She give her Mam a heap o' care
When the trains went by.
But sumthin' 'bout her yellow hair
Just took that stranger's eye.

No one as yet had asked his name,
Where he was bound, or from whence he came,
But kept on smoking all the same
Whether talked or not.
While each cigar 'twas very plain
Grew short and hot.

The express train was then just due;
It stopped not there while passing through;

Just then her warning whistle blew
A few rods back.
A woman's scream, my attention drew
That kid was on the track.

I think if I ever was paralyzed
My feeling then were about that size
For each of us were so surprised
We could not stir.
But my! to see that stranger rise
And fly for her.

For a moment each one held his breath
It was a race for life or death
In such a case I had no faith
Though young and strong;
He caught and flung her clear and safe
While he was dragged along.

Now we weren't long in getting there
And such a sight words can't compare
That genial face was gone entire
And both his eyes.
While locks of his grizzled beard and hair
Lay strewn along the ties.

We raised his body from the ground
One broken arm, hung dangling down
And in the freight house a cot was found
When we perceived
Though blood was streaming from every wound
Yet still he breathed.

Soon as 'twas known what had been done
They all come flocking on a run
Which is the ease with every one
When anything alarms;
And 'mong the rest that mother come
With that baby in her arms.

Tears glistened on many a sun-browned cheek,
The poor stranger was growing weak:
He either groaned or tried to speak,
We couldn't understand;
Then as by some accustomed freak
He motioned with his hand.

And when that woman them motions see
(She was standing not mor'n four feet from me)
She turned just as white as she will be
When she breathes no more;
Then she cried "Oh! God, 'tis surely he,"
Fell fainting on the floor.

They carried her out in the open air
And left her in some women's care
Who bathed her face and wet her hair
Till she brought 'round again;
But about that stranger, what, or where
She never spoke his name.

And so in the public burying ground
To his last long sleep, we laid him down

And nothing 'bout his clothes was found
To pay his funeral fare,
But the picture of a babe so plump and round
And a lock of a woman's hair.

Now every spring when the day comes 'round
When they carry flowers to the burying ground
On that stranger's grave they've always found
Fresh flowers, both tame and wild;
Some say it's that woman what decks that mound
Because he saved her child.

"THE WANDERER'S BRIDE"

OR SEQUEL TO (AND WRITTEN FOURTEEN YEARS AFTER) "THE LOAFER'S STORY"

MANY springs have blossomed early
Many graves have been decked flowery,
Many hearts have been pained sorely,
By death and woe,
Since the Loafer told his story,
So long ago.

Thus time glides on from year to year;
With love, and hate, hope, and fear,
Like shooting stars mortals appear,
Then pass away.
And so a scene is depicted here
Of our decay.

The church was filled e'en to the door,
Soft sunlight through the windows pour:
Two black trimmed rests a casket bore,
  Before the desk,
Showing, alas, one victim more
  Had gone to rest.

Sleep on, O dead, in rest profound,
Until the last great trump shall sound!
There is no sorrow under ground,
  For me or you,
The friends may rise and pass around,
  The corpse to view.

It was a spare yet comely face,
Where lines of sorrow could be traced.
A sun-lit lock of hair was placed,
  Upon her breast,—
That once a daughter's head had graced,—
  The last request!

Now while the friends their tears shed,
Around their loved and lovely dead,
Let us return in thought instead
  A few years back,
When the station at P. was an open shed
  And the line a single track.

A lady had with others come
To the new-made town to find a home.

She was quite reserved with every one,
Tho' modest and mild,
And earned her bread by work well done
For herself and child.

She bore a pure and faultless name,
Respected well by all who came,
Each day of life passed just the same,
Until one day,
A man was killed by a passing train.
She fainted dead away.

No one ever asked her why,
As year by year the time went by.
"Some mystery must underlie"
Was what was said.
And nothing would the facts supply
Till she was dead.

The child grew up with queenly grace
The reigning belle of all the place,
With sweet address and winning ways,
Extremely fair.
With the beauty of the mother's face,
But golden hair.

"Death loves a shining mark," they say,
Earth's fairest flowers he makes his prey
The dread white plague no power can stay—
A relentless foe.
And thus it was she passed away
From scenes below.

At times she seemed to be getting well,
And then her mother's heart would swell
With hope, and many friends would tell
Of Nina's gain.
And then there'd come a coughing spell,
Relapse, and pain.

One day, while trying to get some rest,
With her head upon her mother's breast,
Being very weak and much distressed,
Life's spark most fled,
While the mother's hand her hair caressed,
She feebly said.

"Grieve not dear mother,—nor be distressed—
I feel—I shall—be soon at rest.
Take from my head—one yellow tress, —
You've loved—so long—
And sometime—wear it—on your breast—
When—I am gone."

So when the swallows forsook the eaves,
And autumn winds sighed through the trees,
Scattering far the falling leaves,
As night drew nigh,
A weary soul of earth took leave
For a home on high.

No waxen figure can e'er be found
That with such beauty could abound,

Like a pure white angel, in sleep profound,
So calm she lay.
Too good, she seemed, for the cold, damp ground
Gray mold and clay.

No one e 'er asked, or thought betrayed;
But the mother's wish obeyed,
And her grave was closely made
To where that stranger lay.
And then therein her darling laid,
From sight away.

The mother lived but a few short years,
And never smiled except through tears,
Whose funeral rites, as it appears,
We have just attended.
Was called away to brighter spheres
A sad life ended!

But when the lid had been removed
From an old red chest in a room above,
A paper was found which clearly proved
Her former history,
Written by herself, in words of love,
Explaining the whole sad mystery.

An only daughter, it said, was she;
And a brother she loved most ardently,
While he and the father could not agree,
The case appears.
So he left home and went to sea.
Was gone for years.

The mother's heart was almost broken.
No tidings came, her grief to lighten
And Jimmy's name was never spoken,
Except in whisper.
But still love lingered, a lasting token,
With the little sister.

Meantime a man she since had known,
His love for her had often shown,
Asked her hand, to share his home
Through coming life.
And so e'er many months had flown
She was his wife.

"He was my senior by many a year
And yet I loved him very dear,
The sun ne'er shone more bright and clear
On a happy home.
Then a wee girl baby did appear,
Our very own."

"There was a deaf mute in our town
Who often to our house came down,
Who could not hear a single sound
But talked with hand.
Myself and husband learned the round,
To understand."

"About four months old my babe must be,
When my sailor brother returned from sea

And wished no one to know but me,
He had come home.
So to our house most stealthily,
He came alone.

I hugged and kissed him o'er and o'er,—
We heard a footfall at the door!
Quickly I stepped across the floor
With the joyous information,
But never saw my husband more
Till dying at the station.

And then his face was so much gone,
I could not have guessed, but guessing wrong,
But when that hand I'd known so long,
Spelled out his name.
It all turned dark, My thought was gone.
Was the last that I retained.

His proud spirit could not forego
The thought that I should serve him so.
The green-eyed monster had struck the blow,
Thinking 'twas some other.
Thereby he did not wait to know
It was my brother.

"They told me he would come back again.
For weary months I watched in vain
Till overcome by grief and shame,
I took my little dear,
And got aboard a western train,
And landed here."

The rest of my story you already know.
How much of joy, how much of woe:
But God above ordained it so,
Or it had not been.
Where'er I am, where'er I go,
I will trust in Him.

My earthly course is almost run,
My mission here is nearly done.
The final hour when it shall come,
No one can tell.
But lay my body beside the one
I've loved so well.

The funeral o'er, her last request
Was carried out the very best;
In a well-made grave she was laid to rest,
By that stranger's side,
With that golden tress upon her breast.
Good-bye to the Wanderer's Bride.

And now three graves ranged side by side
Where a fitting stone has been supplied,
They rest in peace, whate'er betide
Till "The Trumpet's Call."
Though far from kindred severed wide
God knows them all.

"EXCERPTS"

FROM "A VISION OF THE UNEMPLOYED"

Some years ago Mr. Frank Stearns presented a picture to the author showing a shabby figure in mid-air, and it seems that—

"PILLOWED upon an ancient grip he lay,
His battered hat had seen a better day,
His worn umbrella, left the choice to you,
To say if it had once been black or blue."

He dreamed that a voice bade him—
"Awake, arise, above this vale of tears"

"And then it seemed that on his shoulders grew
Two plumed wings of irridescent hue
And speeding skyward towards some starry land
Umbrella, grip and all, slipped from his hand."

In four other verses, rare music, rest from work, plenty of food, and old clothes, were filling his dreams when there came a blow and

"A harsh voice cried, 'Get up and go your ways,
You know the law—ten dollars or ten days.' "

"And speeding skyward towards some starry land"

EXPLANATION

RESPECTED friend, do you recall
A picture which once you gave to me?
And asking me to explain withal,
The meaning whereof the same might be
Which seemed by the illustration given
A winged "Hobo" en route for Heaven.

I thought your wording rather plain
And almost held me in contempt,
As though that I was much to blame
For not knowing what the symbol meant
And said such things I should understand
Once having been a newspaper man.

I received your gift for it's real worth
Resolving then thenceforth to try
It's hidden meaning to unearth
Or keep on looking till I die,
That I might find the history
Enshrouded in such deep mystery.

But years passed on without avail
Though I'd looked with care through many a book.
Hope, oft revived would as often fail
Till my weary task I had near forsook
And oft to myself such words I would lisp:
"I am chasing a shadow, or a will o' the wisp."

At last success seems to have crowned
  What heretofore was a dreary fate
Or in other words, "all things come round
  To those," with patience, "who will but wait"
I have clearly solved what the thing does mean
Through the medium of Munsey's Magazine.

You see this world affords great lights
  The brilliance of uncommon men
Who in this earth assume great heights
  In oratory, brush, or pen;
And then at times, could they not unload
They would all fill up and thus explode.

And so one of those of the witty tribe
  Either made the picture or the poem,
Another the second part supplied;
  Or which was first is not worth knowing,
While the whole description of the scene
Is here explained as "A Hobo's Dream."

So Mr. Simonds of the "saw and knife"
  With true worldly wisdom, thought, and care,
Has borrowed the picture and scattered it rife,
  Hereby to advertise his ware
All meaning beside is truly void
Being only "A Vision of the Unemployed."

And now my friend with this explanation,
  I trust you will be satisfied;

Things seeming of vast consideration
Oft the soundest wits have tried,
Yet when followed back to the fountain stream
Are found to be but an idle dream.

THE OLD GREY SPIDER

MY dear, you ask me for a poem,
Nor told me what to write about;
And if I fail for want of knowing
I pray the Muse to help me out;
If this perchance a weakness shows, you will forgive, no doubt.

Since "Byron's Hours of Idleness,"
And Burns boozed o'er his mug o' ale,
And Moore relapsed to childishness,
Which shows that even great men fail,
In view of this, hereof, I pray excuse this Spider tale.

Some may doubt, and even say
To believe such things they never can,
But Æsop's beasts talked in their day
And Balaam's ass spoke like a man,
This tale for truth will equal them.

For one purports to be a fable,
The other the Scripture doth supply,
In describing men we are sometimes able
By the use of things that creep or fly;
Since others do so, why not I?

Once on a time, how nice it seems
To use this quaint old-fashioned style
For giving dates without the names
Appears at once not worth the while,
And deserves a frown, instead of a smile.

There is a story, ancient, old,
About a vain confiding Fly,
Who heeded a tale, a Spider told,
Was then served up for Spider pie
Which shows that Spiders, like men, can lie.

Once on a time, again I say,
An old Grey Spider lived near a mill;
No fault was his for being grey,
Nor growing old, for all things will,
But a Spider once, he's a Spider still.

On a little brown shrub he made his bed,
And that was the place he called his home;
Of another Grey Spider he hired his web
For he never could spin him a web of his own,
And there in solitude lived alone.

Sometimes the monotony was broken,
A Bug, or Bee, by him would stray,
With outstretched arms and soft words spoken
He kindly asked them to stop and stay,
But soon they arose and flew away.

A big Black Beetle from the clime,
Where the sweet potato grows,

Sought out his home, to ease his mind,
And be the balm for all his woes,
And on his Spider breast repose.

But she was black and ugly too,
With a very uninviting phiz,
With a bottle the like he never knew,
And a foot, 'twas twice as big as his;
And then he said, throwing back his head,
"I never can wed one so ill bred,
A mulatto, or negro, which ever she is."

But there was one of another kind,
A specie of some Cross-Bee race,
Even now she haunts the Spider's mind,
And starts the moisture down his face,
Like fountains in some desert place.

The old Grey Spider gazed on her charms,
And sighed a sigh for the day to come,
When he could clasp her in his arms,
While whispering out a soft "yum, yum,"
For old hawks like chickens young.

But the Cross-bee loved another Bug,
And her heart went back to the Connecticut River,
She deemed the old Spider but a worn out plug,
And sighed for the joys he could not give her,
Besides the Bug was a better liver.

For weeks she wrestled with unrest,
  Her very soul for the Connecticut yearned,
She left the old Spider in deep distress,
  While her cheeks, and lips, and bosom burned,
  And to her Love-Bug she returned.

For weeks the old Spider lived alone,
  His fickle fate he still must stand,
He went and came to his lonely home,
  Determined still to try a hand
  If some Bug or Bee were at his command.

One Autumn day so the story's told,
  A Butterfly appeared in sight,
A creature, beautiful to behold,
  In plumage gay, all gold and white,
  Which filled the old Spider with delight.

If beauty lies in any face,
  The Butterfly can show it,
Though Spiders are of a selfish race,
  They have sense enough to know it,
  And can put up with anything, unless it be a
    poet.

But time passed on as it's apt to do,
  Each night gave birth to another day,
Still the old Spider kept her in view,
  And seldom from her went away,
  As if afraid he'd lose her, if from her he
    should stray.

A Blue Fly, or a Bumble Bee,
Would call, her for to see,
Which much aroused his spidership,
From his usual apathy,
And he called them all "Blamed Rascals" of a very low degree.

But the Bumble Bee, he loved her much,
And told her many attractive things,
That she should live (if her choice was such),
Beneath the shelter of his wings,
And never feel the torturing touch of bites or stings.

She heeded not what the Bee did say,
But left the old Spider deep in grief,
For the Blue Fly carried her away,
And left her on a lilac leaf,
And ever more from that fateful day his calls were brief.

The Butterfly soon flew away,
All wholesome restraint defying,
And then one cold October day,
A Dorr-bug found her dying;
Now moldering back to Mother Clay, the Butterfly is lying.

The poor old Spider is without a home,
The Bumble Bee is of little worth,

The Blue Fly has more sober grown,
  Increasing years, decreases mirth,
  Which seems the fate of all the earth.

Had the old Spider chosen a mate
  One near his age and of his race,
Had the Butterfly foreseen her fate
  And with perfect prudence kept her place
  How different would have been the case.

THE CROW AND THE LAMB

ONCE on a time, a flock of sheep
  Were feeding on a distant hill.
  No dogs or wolves caused them to keep
  In constant fear of coming ill.
The lambs were skipping here and there,
So brisk and frisky everywhere
Without a single thought of care
  But to do their own sweet will.

A crafty crow perched on a tree
  That overlooked the pasture view.
A lamb alone, he chanced to see
  And well his own advantage knew.
On feathery pinions he sailed down
Quite near the lambs own feeding ground,
At a proper distance walked around
  Until the lamb less fearful grew.

Soon as he saw her fear was gone
He bowed his head in obeisance low,
And then began with flattering tongue
A talk that well becomes a crow.
He said no lamb where'er he'd been
In any pasture, hill, or glen,
He wished so much to be a friend
Then begged her pardon for saying so.

"O beautiful lamb! there's none so fine.
Your snow-white coat gives me surprise;
So meek I feel in this garb of mine
I hardly dare to meet your eyes.
Those eyes so bright of a hazel hue,
While my own orbs are a cold steel blue;
Had I a chance to exchange with you
I would willingly give most any price.

"Come walk with me, my dear Miss Lamb,
There's something I would love to say.
Though very black they say I am,
I know I'm just as good as they."
And while chattering on in this friendly guise,
In words deceivers can devise,
He quickly picked out both her eyes
And then arose and flew away.

He straightway flew among the trees,
And cawed a caw, just as before;
No pangs of conscience disturbed his ease,
Though a life was spoiled naught could restore,

The mother heard her piteous cries,
And quickly to her lambkin hies,
Those bleeding sockets and sightless eyes
Will never look on that mother more.

There's many a one of a higher grade
Of whom their earthly record shows
In a point of morals, virtue, trade,
Have little to boast above the crows.
Of whom, or what, we will not say
It makes no difference either way.
There's things that happen every day
Evils that everybody knows.

WAITING IN THE CORRIDOR

MY dear Mrs. F— do you recall
A little chat you had with me?
When the time seemed long to the waiting throng
As lingering there impatiently,
And you proposed I make a poem.
Waiting in the corridor, it's name should be.

It calls to mind the case of a maiden
Who was blessed (or cursed) with a rhyming beau;
So at one time she wished a rhyme
Or at least a verse or so.
Now with her request the simile rests,
Our case being vastly different you know.

Now of course you're interested
And wish the sequel to be shown;
She still persisted and strongly insisted
Till his forbearance was nearly gone.
Then, said she'd supply him with words for rhyming,
"Tease, and please, moan, and bone."

To this the youth quickly responded
His state of mind was clearly shown
For what true man throughout the land
Could slight a lady's wishes known.
Yet shows he thought by the verses wrought
'Twere better for man to live alone.

"Fair maids were made young men to tease,
Young men were made fair maids to please,
Ah! how I should my fate bemoan
Were she flesh of my flesh and bone of my bone."
And that's the way the youth responded
But probably not the way it ended.

I'm sure your wish would be my pleasure
With your request would fain comply
But the modest muse may still refuse
To lend her aid to such as I.
Or still it may be before a lady
She might appear a little shy.

She hates the high and haughty heads,
The arrogant and proud,

But sometimes sings of lesser things
In praises long and loud.
Or where tears are shed, her humble head
In sympathy is bowed.

Well, waiting in the corridor,
And wherefore, did we wait?
When a rich man's will, was pending still
To receive uncertain fate.
And lawyer's fees must still increase
In settling the estate.

I used to live in a Southern clime,
Where the buzzard birds abound;
In many ways like the human race,
Those scavengers are found.
And when you hear them hovering near
There's a carcass lying round.

Waiting in the corridor,
Waiting our turn in time,
While seated there above the stair,
Strange thoughts came in my mind,
Could he that's dead return in stead,
What conditions would he find?

There his last will and testament,
Was treated with a sneer,
And every eye was cold and dry
That had looked upon his bier.
How dear to him, would now have been,
A sincere mourner's tear.

Poor, unfortunate, rich man,
How sad must be his fate,
Who hardly can (when life is done)
Enter the Heavenly gate.
And worldly worth, left here on earth
Breeds lawsuits, war, and hate.

It's a lamentable fact in this Christian land,
When one of wealth is of life bereft
Those near of kin, come flocking in,
Who resort to intrigue, lies, and theft,
That through some vein, they may obtain
The lion's share of all that's left.

It sure must be a thankless task
And small the consolation given,
To labor on till life is done,
Of many earthly comforts riven.
Just to obtain, such earthly gain
And lose at last their hope of Heaven.

Waiting in earth's corridor,
But a little time to come,
When we all must go from scenes below,
To our eternal home.
Whether much or less, we here possess
We leave it at the tomb.

Waiting in the corridor,
Just a little time more,

Then it will be said, that we are dead,
Like those that's gone before.
Then all disputes like petty brutes,
Forever will be o'er.

Waiting in the corridor,
Of Life's short little span,
All should strive while yet alive
To help his fellow man.
Till the Judge of all each one shall call
To court, in a better land.

Now please Mrs. F— excuse my verses
By a better head, 'twere better done
But I've only drifted where the muses listed
With due regard to everyone.
If in the smallest measure, it gives you pleasure,
My cup of joy is overrun.

THE DANCE AT WARREN'S POND

COME everyone who take delight,
To shake the foot and of music fond,
Give ear while we a tale recite,
Of the wonderful dance at Warren's Pond,
And if not suited with the same
Remember that we are not to blame.

Now Warren's Pond is a bunch of water
Of which most ponds are made, we think,

Four times as big as, well, no matter
It holds enough for wash and drink,
Yet some of the natives it appears
Have not tasted water for many years.

The gods who made both sea and land,
And scattered beauties everywhere,
Seemed to have an eye on Warren's Pond
And dealt it out a double share,
While on the shore vast pines are seen
Like those of the home of Evangeline.

And noble men of mighty minds
Have thought to do a duty grand,
Have built a villa among the pines
To entertain their fellowmen,
And full many a world weary guest
Have sought and found both peace and rest.

In nook, and cove, and shady walk,
Light feet have often tread the vale
And every tree, had it tongue to talk
Could tell of many a curious tale,
And lovers often sought the spot
For a happy hour in talk, and thought.

In former times, it has been said
There was plenty of drink about the place,
But now no ardent can be had
Unless it be some serious case
That is, if a person was about to die
They might obtain a small supply.

No better hostlery is to be found,
Though you search the country through and through;
The landlord and lady are always around
To see that their guests are attended to.
With this description we advance
Forthwith to tell about the dance.

'Twas in the Fall, on a certain day
The proprietors thought it might be done,
To increase their pile in an honest way
And pleasure give to all who come.
So at once sent out full many a bill
With a polite invite, "Come all who will."

* * * * * * * *

You know we read in the good Holy Word,
That blessings will come if we but believe,
And that beautiful promise so often we've heard
Which says to us "Ask and ye shall receive."
But in worldly affairs, we've an imagination,
It is sometimes subjected to great limitations.

Once there was a king who gave a great feast
Or marriage supper for the sake of his son,
Sent out invitations from the West to the East
But the crowd were not hungry and so would not come.
And this is an instance of which we believe
Where a person may ask and yet not receive.

But the king was determined to conquer the wretches
And have his house filled clean up to the brim,
So sent out patrol through the hedges and ditches,
And rounded them up, and gathered them in.
If Landlord B. could have had such a chance
There would have been a big company out to his dance.

* * * * * * * *

The night was appointed, but soon it was seen
Scarce a fiddler was to be found.
They had mostly gone to "Fiddler's Green,"
Having taken passage underground;
It's a little place outside of hades,
Where fiddlers go who love the ladies.

The night arrived both dark and drear
Yet not a guest appeared the while,
The music was already there
One fiddler coming some thirty mile.
Long, long they waited that murky night
But not a dancer appeared in sight.

Some said it was a dirty trick
The cause therefor they could not see;
"But hope deferred maketh the heart sick"
And we must submit to the laws that be
With grace and patience to respond.
Thus ended the dance at Warren's Pond.

At such a turn the music thought
  There was nothing more for them to do
But to hang on the pot like a greedy-sot
  And to eat before they go.
And so a bountiful board was spread
  Till every hungry soul was fed.

No one e'en thought of being mad,
  For such events are often known,
Yet all the pay the fiddlers had
  Was a supper and the leave of going home.
The curtain falls, here ends the scene,
Success to Blackmer and Mrs. Dean.

AT THE END OF A GUBERNATORIAL CONTEST

WHERE is our Clement to-night, boys,
  Where is our Clement to-night?
Of whom we expected, if he was elected
  We should have of whiskey a sight.
Who took the position, that old prohibition,
  Was in a deplorable plight!
That the Republican ring, was a contemptible
    thing,
  O, where is our Clement to-night?

O, where is our Clement to-night, boys,
  Where is our Clement to-night?

Who with his colored band, appeared on the stand
With shirt bosom, beaming and white.
Who said that McCullough was a two-sided fellow,
And therefore couldn't be right
And also F. Proctor was a quack of a doctor,
O, where is our Clement to-night?

O, where is our Clement to-night, boys,
Where is our Clement to-night?
Who said the best men were wanting of him,
And put up a wonderful fight.
Who didn't think best to make an arrest
No matter if a fellow got tight,
Has wasted our votes and blasted our hopes,
O, where is our Clement to-night?

O, where is our Clement to-night, boys,
Where is our Clement to-night?
Go ask of the leaves that have fallen from trees.
By the breath of the cold breeze's blight
A symbol are they, of all who to-day
Championed the rum-sellers' right.
The saloon, and hotel, still in secret must sell
For gone is our Clement to-night.

DIVERSE CIRCUMSTANCES

WE were the sons of families four,
And given an education
Which few there be that could boast more,
With glowing visions just before
Of wealth and ease and station.

But there was one, a laborer's son,
A poor boy by the name of Jack,
Whom oft we fellows picked upon,
And of his scanty clothes made fun,
But he never answered back.

He worked for the farmers every day,
Whene'er he found something to do,
And gave his parents all the pay,
While all his education lay
In a common school, but a term or two.

While many pursuits we tried in vain,
Our golden dream pursuing,
As often when a failure came,
Our parents helped us out again,
Which nearly wrought their ruin.

But John he struck a lofty branch
As keeper of a big hotel,
And Charles his fortune to advance
As bank cashier he got a chance
While Joe set up a gambling hell.

John formed a taste for wines and beers,
'Midst snakes and dragons passed away,
A shortage in Charles' accounts appears,
He served a term of seven years,
And Joe got shot for unfair play.

Thus cold in death, or feeble health,
The brilliant Charles, and John, and Joe,
Met such reward instead of wealth,
Now I'll return to talk of self,
And tell my tale, and let them go.

I waited long for some great chance,
Much too big to be expected,
But when I found I must advance,
My earthly income to enhance,
I found myself rejected.

As an insurance agent I did begin,
Such months of want I then endured;
My means were gone, my clothes got thin,
And bills continually coming in,
While few would be insured.

Now being reduced to poverty,
Disaster met my every look,
A publishing house heard of me,
And offered a liberal salary
To canvass for their book.

With my outfit, how chagrined I felt,
At this menial occupation,

No friend had I to ask for help,
Not a dollar in my pocket dwelt,
  But with a copious education.

I could speak in Latin, French and Greek,
  Fit for any pageant.
But Homer and Virgil, so to speak,
Make a scanty meal for a man to eat,
  And he a poor book agent.

From day to day, I took my way,
  Calling at every door,
The rich were inclined much fault to find,
With either paper, print, or bind,
  My sales were with the poor.

And they were ever in for trade,
  Though their wants appeared on every hand,
With the strongest promise ever made,
They would declare I should be paid,
  But get it when I can.

While thus persuing my wretched round,
  I came in touch with a new country
At a beautiful farmhouse near the town.
On being admitted, there I found,
  Of all comforts full and plenty.

I sold a book without delay,
  And now comes the curious fact,

When I asked the name, to receipt for pay
It almost took my breath away,
'Twas the happy home of that poor Jack.

At a proper time, I thus began,
To review the altered situation,
And so concluded there and then
That pluck and plod is better for men,
Than a higher education.

MAN VERSUS SHEEP

AS I strolled out one summer's morn
In sober and meditative mood,
Through verdant fields and rustling corn
I thought how God is very good.
Everything is so well supplied,
That every mouth is satisfied.

The growing fruit upon the trees,
The cereal sown throughout the land,
The gentle herds, the tiny bees,
All yield and contribute to man.
While sinful man, be it to his shame,
Thanks not the Giver for the same.

I wandered on in that frame of mind,
Until I came to a mountain, steep;
There, by a brooklet, what should I find
But gracefully grazing, a flock of sheep.
Now if anything ever takes my eye
It's a flock of sheep, feeding near by.

I sat me down upon a rock,
And calmly watched the little crowd,
The form and habits of the flock
And as I thought I talked aloud,
A thing I'm quite inclined to do,
When there's no one else to chatter to.

"Poor things," said I, "as the matter stands,
Your case to me seems quite forlorn.
No hands to clasp in other hands,
Or arms to enfold another's form.
No hands I say with which to do
Any kind of work, if you wanted to.

You are not fitted for the fight,
You have no weapon of defense,
You can neither scratch, nor gore, nor bite,
For stern aggression's recompense.
So your only chance, that is to say,
You must be killed, or run away.

You are down to the ground, can't stand upright
Your arms are legs, and very small,
Limited in language, unfit for the fight,
And as for work, you can do none at all.
Your's sure must be a wretched fate,
You have no loves, nor love to make.

When I was done with my little talk
A big bell wether from out the flock,
With head erect and stately walk,
Approached quite near my sitting rock,

"A big bell wether from out the flock"

With all the air of a noble man;
And, bowing low, he thus began.

"Conceited sir, I find at last
What heretofore I did not discover.
Many might think from what has passed,
That we are of no account whatever.
And because we were not made for work,
That every duty we would shirk.

I had supposed we were of use,
In all kinds of cloth and stocking wear.
Beside meat and leather we produce
In usefulness we do our share.
The very coat upon your back
You borrowed from us, it is a fact,
(A fact amended, let me say)
You took it without returning pay."

"But stop," says I, "good Mister Wether,
Concerning pay, I think you're wrong.
Do not we care for you altogether,
And in the winter keep you warm?
In view of this, how can you say
We take without remitting pay?

And why need you complaining be
Or charge us with the situation?
Are we not known for morality
And also declared a Christian nation?
We mean to treat you very fair,
As we do each one everywhere."

"You took us from our native heath,
(For selfish interest, and brought us here)
Where juicy herb and succulent leaf
Was our subsistence all the year,
To a land of misery, cold and drear
Where winter reigns full half the year.

Compelled in odious barns to stay,
And for subsistence musty hay,
And in the spring our coats are shorn,
Turned out in cold, and wet, and storm,
With no protecting shelter nigh.
How many a poor sheep chill and die?
And then who cares? No one to weep
And the master says, ' 'tis but a sheep.'

Your boasted goodness is a farce,
When self and duty come together
The moral part gets very scarce,
Or stands but little show whatever.
How very proud you sure must be,
To say nothing about your Christianity!

Our greatest crime is to leap the fence,
Which we seldom do save in search of food;
But we don't get drunk and make expense,
A menace to the public good.
We rob no banks for the paltry pence,
And never kill the presidents.

We never run away for fear of shame,
Of things we know are sure to come.

Nor suicide, or go insane,
  Because someone has been undone.
Whose confidence we did betray,
In a financial, or some more wicked way.

In perfect peace we dwell together
  Our bounden duty, and nothing more.
We devise no means to kill each other,
  To take the life we can't restore,
Unless it be some cross old ram
The only sheep that resembles man."

Says I, "Mr. Wether, don't be too hard;
  Your delineation is quite too true.
I think you have the winning card;
  I wish we were as good as you."
Then I returned to my home again,
A wiser, if not a better man.

HUNTING THE COON

HOW strangely doth this world appear,
  As rolling on from year to year;
  So many men, and yet beside,
Each a different hobby rides.
Some for office and honor wishing,
Some for boating, hunting, fishing,
Some are clowns with capers funny,
Some sedate, and making money.

Of all vocations whatsoever,
Rum and hunting go together;
At least the hunter seems to think
He cannot hunt without his drink.
Nimrod, that hunter before the Lord,
If the truth were known, upon my word,
We are willing to wager a considerable sum,
He carried his flask as well as his gun,
And that well filled with old Medford rum.

Concerning this tale I here relate,
Whether true or untrue I will not state.
It's like many stories we hear in youth,
If we can't refute, it must pass as truth.

'Twas in the fall of a certain year,
The corn was ripening on the ear,
Low o'er the hill hung the slender moon,
When three hunters set out to catch a coon.
And knowing hard must be their task,
Each armed himself with a well-filled flask,
And from courage lest they shrink,
They oft would stop and take a drink.
One from his pocket pulled his bottle,
Having then removed the stopple,
He held it up toward the sky,
He crooked his neck, and cocked his eye,
Saying, "Here's death to the biggest coon
That e'er ate corn by the light of the moon."

Low in the west the moon was sinking,
While they sat chatting, smoking, drinking,

When to their ear, far o'er the hill,
Came the voice of their dog, so sharp and shrill.
"A coon," By George! they all did say,
And up and started on their way.

It took some time to reach the place,
For the ground oft met them in the face
And trees that grew along the route,—
Vain, stubborn things, would not turn out.
When they reached the place, but one of three
Had sufficient strength to climb the tree.
The others claimed, as back they fell,
Their only fault was feeling well.

Now, says the one, I'll go aloft,
And see if I can shake him off;
Coons are so bad to bite and scratch
That my young dog will be no match,
So get your clubs and stand around,
And hit him when he strikes the ground.

In finding clubs, stumbling about,
They hit their light, and put it out.
When among the boughs they heard a noise
And then a shout, "He's coming, boys,"
Now each being fast to outdo the other,
They had advanced too near together.
Up went two clubs for the final stroke.
Two clubs came down, two heads were broke,
While senseless on the ground they lay
The coon got up and walked away.

The other then crept softly down.
There was not a stir, there was not a sound.
He struck a light, and to his dismay,
His two companions like dead men lay,
Then, from a brooklet's plenteous pour,
He brought them back to life once more,
When each declared it must have been
That cussed coon that fell on him.
On one more thing they did agree
'Twas the weightiest coon one would ever see.
They all went home. Thus ends the matter.
Which will you have, whiskey or water?

O, FOR SOME DEAR HAND TO MAKE MY BED

HOW sad it seems for a man like me,
Who having worked till day has fled,
Retiring tired as tired can be
Yet find no comfort on my bed,
But tumble and toss till nigh to swoon,
Pitying the sorrows of old Zip Coon.

Some people do in these later days
Which seems to me a bitter cup
To make a bed in such curious ways,
Causing one to sleep with the wrong end up
With feet much higher than the head;
O, for some dear hand to make my bed.

And so for hours, sleep if I can,
Two pillows used in place of one,
Like the evil spirit gone out of man
He seeketh rest and findeth none.
The fly suspended from the ceiling
Is surely blessed with better feeling.

What woman with love within her breast
Would want a friend so crucified
To make a torture of a place of rest
Since that's the way Saint Peter died.
Things have so changed since Peter's day
That few would care to go that way.

But wherefore now should I complain
And much my restless lot deplore?
She that is gone will come again
And make my bed as made before;
Yet to myself, I've often said
"O, for some dear hand to make my bed."

LOVE AND FEAR

YES, darling, when your letter came
My heart did such a rapture feel
I kissed it o'er and o'er again
Where thy dear lips had stuck the seal.
And then I pressed it to my face,
Then kissed again observing where,
Being sure to touch the very place
Because your lips had once been there.

I know that brightest lights must fade,
I know that closest friendships sever,
I know there's new attachments made,
I know there are hearts bowed down forever.
If such a lot must be my doom,
If such a fate must me befall,
Then when love's sun is at its noon,
Let me but die, and escape it all.

A LINE TO A GRANDCHILD

YOUR grandma asked me for a line,
To send you in a letter,
The muse of mine isn't quite in time,
Nor neither can I get her.
Still all my kin are dear to me
All that there is, and what may be;
May each succeed to improve the breed
By each one growing better.

MY FATHER'S DREAM

INSCRIBED TO F. J. BALLOU, BRISTOL, N. H.

HOW vividly do I recall,
A dream that once my father told,
Unto my mother and us children all
I being a lad of seven years old.
So interested he appeared to be,
That it firmly fixed in my memory.

I know there's some that scoff at dreams,
And say 'tis wanderings of the mind.
And there's so much absurdity, it seems
To such belief I'm much inclined:
But still we find, in the Holy Word,
That dreams were held in high regard.

Jacob, Joseph, and Nebuchadnezzar,
And many more that I could name,
Pharaoh, and Daniel, Belteshazzar
Dreamed of things that surely came.
And if perchance they were not exact
They were near enough to prove the fact.

Then who among us can infer,
Or say with proof of certainty,
That those things do not occur
As warnings of our destiny.
If in those days there were such powers
Why not the same exist in ours.

As for the dream my father dreamt,
It would have passed like those before,
But seemed to foreshadow some strange event,
That did transpire in a few years more.
So deeply were his senses stirred
That to the same he oft referred.

He dreamed that near a field he stood,
Where as a boy he'd wandered round,

Where the main highway, or traveled road,
Wound through the hills from town to town.
The autumn sun poured forth its rays,
As if to vie with summer days.

The hills and vales and rippling stream
Appeared the same as in waking hours.
The leafy wood, the meadows green,
The ripening corn, the wayside flowers,
The pasture shrub, the browning brake
All looked the same as when awake.

From the main highway across the stream
There led a road to an extensive wood,
Which was only used by lumber teams,
As along the route no buildings stood;
But a tortuous path led down the hill,
To a place then known as Arnold's Mills.

And while he gazed on forest and field,
There came a sound from the distant wood,
The tramp of horses and rumbling wheels
Came slowly down that mountain road.
They moved along in solemn plight,
As one by one they came in sight.

In the open land they cross the stream,
And thence ascended to the traveled main.
On, on they came, and approaching him,
He saw it was a funeral train.
No gilded hearse with gaudy sheen,
But a plain coffin in a common team.

They passed him by so very near,
Each could be heard with perfect ease:
The rattle of the harness gear,
The creaking of the whiffletrees;
And though they passed him very slow,
Not a face was he doomed to know.

On down the road they moved along,
Until at last they disappeared;
He watching till the last was gone,
And nothing farther saw or heard.
Then waking from this solemn scene
At morning told to us his dream.

Year by year the seasons rolled.
We had our home between the hills:—
Reed's Hollow, then the place was called,
And about a mile from Arnold's Mills.
And there we lived, quite free from care,
As poor people most always are.

Meantime my father had bought some land
That near the top of the mountain lay,
And thereupon a house began,
And gave our home in part for pay.
'Tis well I say a house begun
For really in fact it was never done.

Fifty acres of timber strong
And not a rod of it was clear,
His health was poor, and I was young,
I scarce had reached my thirteenth year.

I had a brother older than I,
But as for him we pass him by.

My father and I did what we could
  While the summer and autumn days went past,
We built a part, but not very good,
  And finally we moved in at last.
But now as I recall to mind,
We had left our comforts all behind.

The next autumn time, my mother dear
  Again was called to motherhood;
A sickly infant did appear,
  Far up amid that lonely wood.
And being removed from doctors far
Was nigh impossible to get help there.

O, there are scenes could we forget,
  Or been unconscious at the time,
Or even through such times had slept,
  A sight of sorrow had it saved the mind!
But the Great Designer hath fixed it so,
That each must bear their share of woe.

Scarce two weeks had been passed by,
  When she called my father to her bed,
And told him she was going to die;
  That death was near and hope had fled,
Already did she feel the pain
Of the deadly current through her frame.

Poor father sat, or rather fell
Into a chair that stood close by.
Quick came her breath, her cheek grew pale,
With a strained expression about the eye.
So rapidly had been its course,
She could hardly speak for being hoarse.

And then she had her children called
And come and stand beside her bed.
She wished to bid farewell to all:—
Betty, myself, Flone, and Fred.
While father seemed all stupefied,
And her little babe lay by her side.

There was a new dish lately bought,
A water-dipper made of tin.
Poor mother wished to have it brought
Beside her bed, with water in.
Then motioned more than spake, I think,
That all of us should from it drink.

Father, Betty, myself and the others,
Even the babe was given some;
She seemed to miss the older brother,
Who at that time was not at home.
And had it placed to her dying lips,
And 'twixt groaning breaths took little sips.

I thought I knew what was her intent,
For her faith was strong in the life to come:

A symbol of the sacrament,
A pledge for us of a brighter home.
I have suffered sorrow's keenest dart,
But nothing like that to tear my heart.

Poor father there in his chair sat,
Like a person dazed or stupefied.
Not a word did he say as yet,
Unless to questions he replied.
And there we stood with sobs and tears,
While the death angel was drawing near.

And here I can't describe the scene,
No word of mine could justify.
Suffice to say she fell asleep,
To wake no more with mortal eyes.
All other sorrows I have known
Are small compared with that single one.

Next morning when the sun arose
I went to look on that face so kind.
I found it resting in that repose,
A rest some day we all must find;
Though most fifty years have come between,
My tear drops fall at the remembered scene.

The funeral day at length arrived
And many came from near and far.
O'er a rugged road they had to drive
To pay their sad respects to her.
So many virtues she possessed
They loved her most who knew her best.

And when the last sad rite was said
  Then began that mournful ride
Adown that rough and sinuous road,
  I, sitting by my father's side.
Though great his grief, no tear he shed.
I tried to cheer by words I said.

The tramp of horses the jolt of wheels,
  The creaking of the whiffletrees,
Some latent thought seemed to reveal,
  Or waken some past memories.
Then he cried out, with painful mein,
Ah! this is it, my dream; my dream!

From that mountain road to a distant town,
  That funeral cortege took their way.
And laid her in the cold damp ground,
  Where her three other children lay;
Two sisters, and the oldest brother,
Then we bid farewell to that dearest mother.

In three months' time her little babe
  For a mother's nursing pined, and died.
In a tiny coffin was conveyed
  And laid to rest by its mother's side.
In life her love was very strong
In death they were not parted long.

My father in spirit was broken down
  And scarcely smiled from that funeral day.

His hair and beard, once a rich dark brown
In a little time was nearly gray.
In years but three and forty then
He looked to be three score and ten.

Less than two years from the same abode
There went another funeral train,
Down that same rough mountain road,
And laid him beside his lamented Jane.
Now to father and mother forever good bye,
O, God have pity on an orphan's cry.

The curtain falls upon the scene,
A sad retrospection it has been,
But useless had I told the dream,
Without its counterpart thrown in.
Brighter scenes I could brought to view
But none, alas, could be more true.

A WAIL OF WOE

WHY does this world so think of me?
They seem to act, or seem to see,
That I am one of high degree,
In some exalted station.
That my every step a guide should be
For the rising generation.

And why expect so much of me?
That's more than mortal man can be.

I boast not of Christianity
Though perhaps 'twere best.
I take the part assigned to me,
And leave the rest.

They dog my footsteps, night and day.
They set my failings in array.
For my misdeeds they gravely say,
They much deplore.
And yet I do the same as they
And nothing more.

I count my conduct only fair.
There's none so good they've any to spare.
In no street corner do I make my prayer,
My righteous banner flying.
And when folks tell how good they are
I think they're lying.

Ye hypocrites, who love so well
Concerning other's faults to tell,
Just turn your thoughts at home a spell:
Perhaps you'll trace
The time and spot maybe you fell
Slightly from grace.

Why be eternally throwing stone?
Perfection you will find in none.
Why should not I be let alone;
That's all I wish.
I do not ask to use your spoon.
Please then keep out my dish.

I sometimes wish that I were dead
The friendly earth clods o'er my head,
While slimy grave worms round me tread,
  My companions thus to be:
Though daily on my flesh they're fed
  'Twere preferable to me.

Ye slandering imps, you little know,
Or heed, or care, for another's woe,
But hourly seek the overthrow
  Of those your betters.
Your father, the D——l waits for you,
  With chains and fetters.

The ointment stinketh from dead flies.
So folly in him accounted wise
Becomes a source of great surprise;
  And yet they claim
There no wisdom in me lies
  But still they blame.

Right well 'tis known there is a host
Who of forbidden fruit might boast.
Ye are all possessed of Adam's ghost,
  As well as me.
Perhaps it's not a week at most,
  Since you were up a tree.

This final heed, ye thoughtless one,
Abuse, accuse and have your fun,

Fill up your cup till overrun
With earthly pleasure.
By and by grim Death comes stalking on,
And strictes* the measure.

HIS FIRST PRAYER

THE sun was setting o'er Phelps' Hill
Long shadows up the valley lay,
The thirsty earth had had its fill
From a long and copious rain that day.
The crystal drops on every side
Smiled an adieu to the setting sun;
The swollen brook seemed to feel a pride
As laughing on its way it run.

Near the stream was a humble cot
With a beautiful orchard round about
While lower down was a garden plot,
Where now the brook ran in and out.
Not that the brook forsook its course,
Or a new channel made at all,
But just the recent rain perforce
Formed a miniature lake within the wall.

Out from the cot when the rain had ceased,
Came a little boy, some eight years old,
Feeling very glad to be released,
And down around the garden strolled.

A little brown bird, a tiny wren,
With tail erect, and head so small,
Like himself a prisoner all day had been
Now skipped about around the wall.

The little boy picked up a stone,
Nor thinking what he had better do,
And quickly at the bird he flung,
Alas! his aim was all too true.
The cruel stone had done its work.
She fell floating on the little pool.
He picked her up, quite pleased at first,
Like most of boys, as a general rule.

But when he saw her drooping head,
Her dead closed eyes, with not a stir,
He realized that she was dead,
Then thought, What did I kill her for?
He gently stroked her soft brown coat,
His bosom heaved with pent-up sighs,
A lump of grief came in his throat,
As he gazed upon those dead closed eyes.

Conviction woke within his mind;
Regret and grief came more and more,
So bad it seemed to take a life,
A life which he could not restore.
He cast about to find relief,
Unto his father he dare not go,
Into his ear to pour his grief
The balm for all his childish woe.

For now it turned, on the other hand,
And plainly came his father's words,
In pleasant yet in firm command,
"My little boy, don't stone the birds."
Now such a course would never do.
He dare not tell his grief to him.
Instead of solace for his woe,
Might bring trouble without, as well as within.

He put the bird in a soft dry spot.
The thought of God came in his mind;
From his earliest memory he had been taught
As a friend that's ever true and kind.
Then his course he plainly saw
And to the hill pasture did repair,
And beside a rock, on bended knee,
Poured forth his childish heart in prayer.

The Lord's Prayer he had been taught
At his mother's knee, as many things
Which parrot-like he did repeat
While playing with her apron strings.
Ah, many a prayer, I am afraid,
By those professing better things,
Are as heartless and as useless made,
As toying with some apron strings.

But as for that little boy's prayer,
His cheeks bewet with the penitent tear,
With a heart most broken with despair,
Was such as God must love to hear.

"O, God," he cried, "look down on me,
So wicked, wretched, and full of woe,
For mother says that you can see
Our every act and thought you know.

I did not mean to kill that bird.
And, O, it was a dreadful sin,
But if you will forgive me, Lord,
I'll never do the like again.
'Twas the only life I did ever take,
And none I ever wanted to,
Except some mouse or nasty snake,
And they're no earthly good you know.

But that little bird has done no hurt,
Nor in the least offended me.
I threw that stone, just for sport,
Not thinking what the end would be.
But when I saw her on the wall,
With a quick thought I was possessed.
I threw the stone and saw her fall.
O, now, dear Lord, you know the rest.

You know how sorry is my heart
Of being the means of giving pain.
O, I would give all I have got,
To bring her back to life again.
May be she has some little birds,
All snug and warm their nest within,
Who now are watching, with hungry mouths,
For her who'll never come again.

O, will not you care for them, Lord?
I would if I knew where they staid,
But the hand that killed the mother bird
Is powerless now to give them aid.
Now take me, Lord, and punish me,
All that I deserve to be.
If I could restore her life once more,
I could bear anything cheerfully.

But grief of mine cannot impart
Life again to that little wren.
O Lord, have pity on my aching heart,
I ask for Jesus' sake. Amen."
Now, I've told you true and certain
Of that little boy's prayer,
Perhaps not given quite verbatim
But the meaning all is there.

How very different from some orison
We hear in church or public place
Where God is made the second person
And they themselves take all the praise.
I've often thought, when to church I went,
And listened to some lengthy prayer,
How much valuable breath is spent
In telling God how good they are.

Poor little boy, he little knew,
The sense of wrong that made him grieve
Taken from a philosophic view,
Was the punishment he did receive.

As grows the sprout, so stands the tree,
A proverb plain to understand,
A likeness or a simile,
As was the boy so is the man.

That boy lived on to the silvery age,
Avoiding every possible strife,
In wanton sport would not engage,
And never for pleasure took a life.
One little precept, and I am through,
And end this little story here:
Wherever you are, whatever you do,
Boys, always keep your conscience clear.

RECOLLECTIONS

OUR home was in a little dell,
With three high mountains round about,
On North, and East, and South, as well
Like a huge cradle with foot-board out,
Towards the west,
Where the sun's last rays seemed fain to dwell
E'er sank to rest.

Where each side mountain meets the East
From unknown springs two streams arise,
Converging as their course increase
And joining where the valley lies,
At the upper end,
Thus forming a brook of considerable size
Down through the glen.

About its banks happy children walked,
To enjoy themselves as children will;
They fished, and played, and laughed and talked,
And ran at races round the hill,
Or side by side,
Watched the stream from some nearby rock,
For a delusive ride.

I was not more than six years old,
When first I learned to bait my hook
I cast my line in many a hole,
Along the banks of that noisy brook,
O, what delight;
I dropped my pole and ran for home,
At my first bite.

How vividly do I recall,
Those boyhood days, each remembered scene,
The lower falls, the Towsley knoll
The caving bank across the stream,
So rough and steep,
The old house lot, where the Parish boy stole
The August sweets.

And the little dun cow, that father had,
She being the family's milk supply,
With her calf removed, she felt so bad,
Across the fields she'd look and cry,
As in despair;
And we children claimed, our Bossy said,
Is Johnny t-h-e-r-e?

The stony road, the steep side hills,
The clump of spruce near the pasture bar,
Where the boy doctor with powders and pills,
Called on his patient, Nancy R.,
Who indignant grew,
And left with her pretended ills,
Without adieu.

There was the flat above the spring,
Where grandpa came and helped us hoe,
Where Crackey broke the gobbler's wing,
With stones he so much loved to throw
To show his art,
And when the same I came to know,
It broke my heart.

Those childhood days have passed away,
Like the many friends that's gone before,
Our mirror says we're old and gray,
And can be young, no, never more,
The fate of all;
Yet let us take what there is in store
Till the final call.

GRANDFATHER'S PIG

OHO, oho, there's a story I know,
Descended to me thro' a maternal line,
Concerning my grandfather near a century ago,
When wild beasts were plenty, and hunting was fine.

The scene of my subject I here will relate,
Is laid in a country where forests abound,
On the side of a mountain in the Green Mountain State,
With bruins so numerous, it was christened Bear Town.

The people there living were a curious lot,
For morals, or honor, they little expressed
To the sweet voice of conscience they hardly gave thought,
If such a rare quality they ever possessed.

No one is to blame for what others have done,
In those days it was called a despicable spot;
A Sodom, and Gomorrah, if there ever was one,
Maybe by to-day they're a Christ-loving lot.

Poor old grandfather lived there with the rest,
With his hands for his income, and family big;
And ne'er all the treasure, in this world he possessed
Was the aforesaid family, and a nice thriving pig.

One thing is certain whatever it be,
Men prized their possessions, whether little or big,
It may be a railroad, or ships on the sea,
All the way down to a sheep, or a pig.

The prospective porker was placed in a sty,
  Within an inclosure and encircled about,
Consisting of logs so strong, and so high,
  'Twas thought no wild "varmint" could get in or out.

There came a time one dark stormy night,
  The rain fell in torrents on forests and fen
The people were given a terrible fright,
  When a pitiful squealing was heard in the pen.

They rushed to the door, yet nothing could see,
  So dense was the darkness, one almost could feel,
They dare not pursue, for a bear it might be,
  While fast towards the forest continued the squeal.

Next morn, held an inquest, to discover the facts.
  And note how that bruin got out of the pen;
No scratch on the logs, or traces of tracks,
  But what might be made by the travel of men.

When butchering time came round the next Fall,
  And many good hogs to slaughter were brought,
One of his neighbors, had the best one of all,
  But none ever knew where the porker was bought.

Grandfather died, and returned back to clay,
A man full of years, of labor, and cares,
And never once doubted till his dying day
But what his poor pig, made a supper for bears.

JOHN JONES

HELLO! John Jones, how do you do?
You're looking fine, and are, no doubt.
What's the good word? Is there anything new
That's worth the while to talk about?
How has the Agency progressed?
Has law and order been possessed?
And is the drinking man distressed
Since Agent Green stepped down and out?"

"Yes, I am well, as well as can be.
There's not much news to tell perhaps
Except the Steamer Aid company,
One night at drill, had some little "scraps."
We go for Clement and his license fad, too;
Some fines have been paid, and that is bad, too;
And some have been married and were glad to;
And there's been a great decrease in cats.

"The Liquor Agency, it is a fact,
Is no fit place for many a one.
Some develop a desire for killing cats
And some a taste for sampling rum.

The present incumbent, so they say
Against all felines his malice lay;
So, many a cat has passed away
From the deadly shot of his dreadful gun.

"A beautiful kitty, with fur like silk
Belonged to a neighbor who lived nearby.
She caught her mice and drank her milk
Nor on chickens cast a longing eye.
One day, he saw her walking 'round.
He immediately his gun took down;
A sudden flash! A dreadful sound!
And poor little kitty had to die.

"He picked her up and carried her down,
(Methinks he wore a fiendish smile)
And interred her in his cat-burying ground
Where many a cat he'd buried, the while.
But when her owner learned the same,
He quickly to the agent came,
And had him dig her up again,
And given burial in a decent style.

"And there they sleep, full many a cat,
No friend to know where rest their bones;
'Tis thought if he their tablets bought
His salary would not supply the stones."
"All right, my friend, I'm glad you're well.
I would 'twere dogs, not cats that fell.
If there's nothing more than that to tell,
I must be going. Good-bye, John Jones."

ONLY A FEW YEARS BACK

SONG

YOU need not feel so proud, my son,
And hold so high your head,
Nor think all eyes will on you turn
Because you're newly wed.
It is not all admiration,
Which you'll find to be a fact,
It is the road your father's trod
Only a few years back.

Refrain—

Only a few years back, my son,
Only a few years back,
We old men too were young like you,
And much the same did act.
We thought the world was made for us,
Which shows what sense we lacked;
'Twas only a few years back, my son,
'Twas only a few years back.

In youth's bright rosy morn, my son,
How pleasant all things seem!
The happy hours glide sweetly on,
Like a leaf upon the stream.
But soon will age and ailments come
Like wolves upon the track
And crush the joys that once were ours,
Only a few years back.

How often 'tis the case, my son,
When Cupid's charms first move,
To think our choice the only one
That none possess such love;
But after years of wedded life,
Their love grows cool and slack,
And then they sigh, "what a fool was I
Only a few years back."

There is a wrong I've seen, my son,
Which does seem strange, of course,
So many a match in joy begun
Have ended in divorce,
Heed not the world, its cheers nor sneers.
'Tis only senseless clack,
It has caused strife 'twixt man and wife,
Only a few years back.

Just one word more to you my son,
And my advice is through,
Think when to years your bride has come
You're on the same road too.
But love and care for the silvered hair,
Which now is glossy black,
And cherish her whose choice you were,
Only a few years back.

THE WHIP-POOR-WILL

DEAR friend of mine, do you recall,
A ride we took one summer's night,
The air was balmy, dark withal,
The stars shone forth with a feeble light.
And nature's voices all were still,
Except the notes of the Whip-poor-will.

The crescent moon perhaps had set,
Or if in full an hour late;
The fire-fly his lamp had lit,
Whereby to try and find his mate
For fear if he neglect to mind her,
Some other lightning-bug might find her.

Wise little bug! Man would do well
Thy simple course to imitate.
How many griefs and tears dispel.
By zealous care to guard their mate:
But if inclined to ways that's vain,
To try and win them back again.

But right is right and is never wrong,
And man is what he is made to be.
Willful, selfish, and headstrong,
A type of inconsistency.
No moral mission can I fulfill
But to sing the praise of the Whip-poor-will.

In rapture wrapt we rode along,
As their notes rang forth from vale and hill,

Not David's harp or siren's song
Would have had the charm of the Whip-poor-will.
I have heard sweet music in many a land,
But none compared with that feathered band.

The time is passed and we are gone.
No more the Whip-poor-wills remain.
The time will come they will return,
Maybe we too may meet again.
But until stern death my memory stills
I will never forget the Whip-poor-wills.

AN ANSWER

This answer was sent to Miss Grant, a pupil at Northfield, who sent her love to the author, and asked him to send her a sheep.

MY dear Miss G. I will agree
It is not a thing uncommon
For a man like me, though wed he be,
To receive love from another woman.

Yet I confess your mild request
I cannot grant in full;
I cannot send a sheep, my friend,
But will send a lock of wool.

And now fair maid, don't be dismayed,
Or feel the least surprise,
For it's understood, that wool is good,
Unless pulled over the eyes.

One word to you, and then adieu,
As long as life endures,
Let never a beau, whether married or no,
Pull any over yours.

CONSOLATION

WHY grieve for things we cannot help,
Since grieving is in vain;
Why waste our tears and weary self,
For things we can't obtain?
Half our care, and half our tears
Are based on false or fleeting fears,
After night the morn appears,—
Bright sunshine after rain.

TWO LITTLE GIRLS

This poem brought the wood and the old neighbor still lives.

TWO little girls lived by themselves,
By themselves lived all alone,
No prettier girls the world e'er saw
Or happier girls were known.
They studied, and read, worked and played,
Meaning to do right, but seldom prayed,
And never felt the least dismayed,
Unless their wood was gone.

A chilly old neighbor lived thereabout,
Though seeming bad, meant to be good;

So every time when the girls got out,
From his scanty pile supplied them wood.
Thus to be just he did aspire,
To keep peace with his conscience while the girls kept fire
To warm themselves to their heart's desire,
And smiled that thus he could.

But autumn time soon passed away,
Stern winter came, with icy breath,
Those thoughtless girls had forgot to pay
Back in wood again, as they should in faith,
So one morning when the girls came down
All good and warm for their school in town,
Their poor old neighbor there they found,
All frozen stiff in death.

KITTY GOOD-BY

DARK comes the night with its damp, deathlike shadow,
Sadly the autumn winds sigh through the bough,
Hushed is the song of the lark in the meadow,
Gone like the breath of a false lover's vow.
Where is the hope that once swelled my bosom?
Where is the joy that once lighted my eye?
Gone, like the blush of the past summer's blossom,
Plucked by foul fingers; then Kitty Good-by.

For the source of my sorrow I will not accuse thee,
Though straws show the source from whence the winds blow.
If I am mistaken, in mercy forgive me,
For sad sinks my heart at the thought of your woe.
In spite of the past, if I am discarded,
In spite of the flower I have valued so high,
In spite of the bud so sweetly regarded,
If that's the position, then Kitty Good-by.

I will make no complaint, though my heart it is bleeding,
And no one the source of my sorrow shall trace,
Though the worm of despair at my heart strings is feeding,
And furrows of sadness are stamped on my face.
Husband ne'er lived that was ever more faithful:—
The joy of my heart, the light of my eye,
Misguided by lips too often untruthful,
Usurped by another, then Kitty Good-by.

What's my reward for the steps I have taken?
And where is the gain for the dangers I've dared,
If flattered to-day and to-morrow forsaken,
And you yield to another the bliss I have shared?

Yet never a word will I utter against thee
Till the cold hand of death close my lips and mine eye.
But like a true man I would will to assist thee,
Though gone from my arms; then Kitty Good-by.

Surely the snare is almost completed,
Plain the handwriting is stamped on the wall,
If you heed not the warning, so often repeated,
Sure you must meet with a ruinous fall.
I speak not in anger, but sober and honest,
Take heed of the danger that's lingering nigh,
Be true to your conscience, be true to your promise,
Or else I must ever say, Kitty Good-by.

FOOD AND SLEEP, OR LITTLE WILLIE

YOU spake to me about your dreams
Which are peculiar, wierd and strange,
I am no M.D. and yet it seems
Your digestive force must be deranged.
I have heard it said, and I think it's right,
To eat a meal however light
Before retiring for the night
Is productive of unhappy change.

There are some people, so I've heard said,
And for such practice I can't see why
Who every night before going to bed
Must cram their stomach with a piece of pie,

Then tumble and toss with stomach ache
Till morning comes; soon as awake
They then some noxious nostrum take
For fear that they are going to die.

I don't mean you, nothing of the sort,
By such measures you would not stick
But three meals a day, when days are short
Is enough to make a person sick.
Nature's ways are always best,
There's a time to eat and a time to rest,
No one sleeps well with stomach pres't
'Tis taxing digestion a little too "quick."

There was once a man who called a doctor,
Who asked "What practice do you pursue?"
"I eat," says he, "before retiring,
A piece of mince pie, last thing I do
And then my dreams are full of bother,
I dream of seeing my grandmother."
"Well," said the doctor, "If you'd eat another
You might dream of seeing your grandfather
too."

Now apropos of what's been said
A little story I will reproduce
As told me by a friend I had,
It happened when he was but a youth.
Bereft of parents and left alone,
Like the fate of many an orphan shown,
On the tender mercies of others thrown
And this he told as strictest truth.

With a rich old farmer he went to dwell,
For a little schooling, his clothes and keep,
About most of things they used him well,
But kept him short on things to eat.
'Tis a well-known fact of a growing lad
He wants enough to eat, and wants it bad
And if denied, sometimes gets mad
And resorts to means that can't be beat.

He said, many a night when he went to bed
And closed his eyes and tried to sleep
Such thoughts of food run in his head
All tempting like, and niee to eat.
But just restitution was drawing nigh,
A hungry boy to satisfy,
In everything a full supply,
Abundant, ample, and complete.

It happened on a Sabbath day,
That the old man was going from home,
And all the family went away,
And left the lad to keep house alone.
When all had gone, he began to feel
What he wished to eat, would be no steal
So he thought he'd get him a good square meal,
Whether or not it was ever known.

He straightway to the garden went,
And dug a peck of "Early Rose,"
Picked peas and beans to quite an extent
Besides other things that in a garden grows.

So he threw himself under a little spruce, and in a minute was fast asleep

Two cabbage heads he also got,
Of beets and carrots he pulled a lot,
Enough to fill a dinner pot
He picked, and then cooked all of those.

Next to the cellar he did repair,
Two pounds of pork he got and fried,
And bread and butter, an ample share
Preserves, and pickles, and cake, beside.
When all was ready for this bounteous fare,
He to the table drew his chair
And sat and ate all that was there
Which would made a dozen satisfied.

The day was hastening to be night,
The sinking sun was shining still
Flooding the earth with a golden light,
Shedding warm, soft rays, o'er vale and hill.
The time for chores had come by now,
So he fixed up and left the house
And went to the pasture for the cows
His daily duty to fulfill.

As he was winding up the path
He felt oppressed by the glowing heat,
He felt a shortness of his breath,
So weary, and such lagging feet.
Says to himself, "What is the use,
Why I should not rest there's no excuse?"
So he threw himself under a little spruce
And in a minute was sound asleep.

Well, night came on and the folks came home,
By other hands the chores were done,
For no one knew where the boy had gone
And the old man milked his cows alone.
And so it was on the following day,
Things kept along in their usual way,
About the boy there was nothing to say
For they thought him gone where formerly known.

Mornings came, and nights would follow,
Suns arose, and suns would set,
There was none to look for the little fellow
To shield from heat or dewey wet.
Winds arose and whistled o'er him
Gathering clouds with rain would pour him
All the world seemed to ignore him,
But still the little fellow slept.

And now the nights grew long and chilly,
Of coming Winter it bespeaks,
Out in the field lays little Willie,
Closed are his eyes and pale his cheeks.
But ha! he stirs, he opens his eyes,—
With vain attempts he tries to rise,
He casts about, to his surprise
He finds he's lain there about three weeks.

Now peradventure, you doubt the truth
Whether this tale be true or not,
I will herewith supply the proof
For when the lad was in the lot

There came a certain camera fiend,
Who took a snapshot of the scene
And now the same to you I'll send,
'Tis the only one that was ever got.

THE CLERK OF PIGEON'S STORE

IN FIVE PARTS

Read before the W. C. T. U. State Convention at Bellows Falls, Vermont, Oct. 3, 1901

Part First

A Court Scene

"YOUR HONOR," said the attorney,
Addressing the all wise Court,
"The case that's now before you
Is of the gravest sort;
A crime of vast enormity,
Has been perpetrated of late,
Against all moral consisteney,
And the dignity of the State."

With many times, "Your Honor,"
"May it please the Court," and sueh,
Till the Court began to ponder
If he'd ever had so much.
Then from the warrant, at the proper time
He read the date, and place,
The name and nature of the crime,
And the respondents in the case.

The Court till now had hardly stirred,
  Just bowed, as if agreed,
Scratched down some great uncertain words,
  And muttered out, "Proceed."
Perhaps he had been thinking,
  What a lucky man he'd been
To have escaped temptation,
  Or the consequence of sin.

Now all was arranged, with haste and bustle,
  Each witness called and sworn;
And seats were exchanged, and papers rustle
  Like leaves before the storm.
When order again resumed her reign,
  And quiet did restore,
And wits being taxed to reveal the facts,
  Let us look the Court Room o'er.

Whom have we here that's thus accused?
  An old-time hardened one,
Who law and order hath abused,
  In selling accursed rum.
For crimes on earth he's often paid
  In gold, yet who can tell
Of the countless worth, in his wicked trade,
  Of souls he's sold to hell.

Spectator dear, don't ever fear
  Or drop a tear of thine;
This wretched brute will soon get clear
  By paying a moderate fine:

And soon another case is called,
Another prisoner takes the place.
The State's Attorney addresses all,
The same as in the former case.

Part Second

A Spectator's Story

Lo! Behold, this is not a man!
Look on those eyes, so mild.
Behold that face, so pale and wan,
Whose woman's life is scarce begun,
She is hardly but a child.
She to this great tribunal came,
This child, the bride of half a year,
Behold the grief, regret and shame:
No eye to pity, but many to blame
Great God! What mercy have we here?

The love of folly runs so high,
Temptation is so strong,
That many a one while passing by,
May turn aside, nor asking why,
A path should lead to wrong.

No thought of law ran through her head
Nor conscience made the least complaint:
Although a bride, to another wed,
A married life so short had led,
She felt not its safe restraint.

A few old heads court always brings
  Sat tilted back in their big arm chairs,
And by sly winks, and whisperings,
They talked of many curious things
  Not found in books of prayers.

And then, with the thought that satisfies,
  Their own pure robes were brought to view.
They felt the pride deceit supplies;
How white they looked in others' eyes
  Compared with her crimson hue.

And pious old Deacon Goodenough,
  He gave an exhortation.
He said, "such base and wicked stuff,
Without God's grace to keep it off
  Would surely curse the nation."

He said, "for all our care and toil
  As a punishment for sin,
The blight and frost would lay waste our soil
That worms, and bugs, our crops would spoil,
  And destruction would begin.

And then he thought,—and his eyes grew
      bright,—
  Of scenes in his own pure life;
How a week ago last Sunday night,
No one would know whether wrong or right,
  He kissed neighbor Worldling's wife.

'Twas by inspiration, we understand,
Nor could he his acts control;
Though the operation pleased the man,
It was ordained by the great wise plan
Through the body to reach the soul.

* * * * * * * *

The case is through. What greets my ear?
"Guilty" I hear the foreman say.
Now comes the sentence of five long years.
A father's sigh, a mother's tears,
And the weeping prisoner is led away.

Now let me say to each proud lass
Don't try a fallen mate to spurn,
Don't look so high, as on you pass:
Your house is also made of glass;
It soon may be your turn.

Think ye that those whose life was spent,
On whom the tower of Siloam fell,
Were greater sinners than those extant?
I tell you nay, "Except ye repent
Ye shall all perish as well."

Think you this child, whose sin was shown,
Was far more vile than hundreds 'round?
I tell you no, if the truth was known,
And each transgressor were in prison thrown,
Sufficient guards could not be found.

To shelter vice we've no design,
  Nor have we lot or part,
But just to show full many a time
The onward flow of vice and crime,
  From ignorance often start.

How happy must those parents be,
  Whose children dutiful remain,
From every vice and folly free,
And delight not in perversity,
  Nor give their parents pain.

Part Third

Making Officers

"Good evening, Judge, how do you do?
  You must be tired to-night;
Let me fix a glass of sling for you.
It will cheer you up and rest you too.
By the way, I hear that case is through.
  I swear, you served her right.

For several weeks she's been going round,
  With a sort of beau she had before.
They will find such things will not go down,
In a civilized and Christian town,
When they went for him he could not be found.
  He used to clerk it in Pigeon's store."

"You'd not catch my son in such a muss.
  For better things he was intended.
In my good advice he always trusts."

And while the father was talking thus
The lad was too drunk for love or lust,
In the dining room extended.

"Her husband, by the way, you see,
Is as good a fellow as you'd find in years.
For several months he's been with me,
And sometimes gets on a little spree;
And that's the why they could not agree,
So she picks up, and clears."

"That case of mine was different you see.
Here, this drop is ready, may it give you cheer.
I keep a house of respectability,
Both Bench and Bar patronize me,
And friends of very high degree,
In circles, far and near."

The Judge—
Now, Mr. Brown, I will say to you,
You had the sympathy of the Court:
Could I have done as I wanted to,
I'd dismissed the case, long e'er 'twas through.
But must keep the public wish in view,
In them is my support."

"And viewing the case from every side,
I did my very best, I think.
The fine was the least the laws provide,
In any case I've ever tried.
"Well, thank ye, Judge, I'm satisfied.
Here, take another drink."

Now about support, says Landlord Brown.
"I don't believe in bribes, you see,
But Prohibition must come down:
Some strong man ought to represent this town.
You can depend on me, when the time comes round.
If you'll speak a word for me."

Judge—

"I see no cause why you should not win,
So very modest is your request."
States Attorney Kemp just then came in,
Who being pledged in a glass of gin,
They submitted the case in full to him.
Who declared he thought it best.

They drank and talked, till the hour was late,
And as might have been expected,
The breath of rum made up the slate.
Attorney Kemp, he stumped the State,
Another term was the Judge's fate,
And Brown, he got elected.

Part Fourth

A Citizen's Story

And so the time drags slowly by:
Poor sinful Nell doth in prison lie,
And little hears or sees.

Old Brown had gone to his last long home,
In an epileptic fit, though caused by rum.
Her husband, too, had met his doom,
In one of his "little sprees."

That model son, still there doth dwell,
And tries to run the old hotel
(To ruin it would appear).
He married too has been, of course,
But his wife soon left, and got divorce:
His tongue seems thick, his voice is hoarse;
His eyes are red and blear.

The sin of the father upon the son,
Such seems the reward for selling rum,—
And will be evermore.
The world moves on with busy hum,
And even Nell is forgot by some,
And still no tidings ever come
From the clerk of Pigeon's store.

And now five years have passed away.
And free the prisoner comes to-day,
Free only in the name:
The hills and vales she used to know,
Seem but to frown, or reflect her woe:
To a father's house she cannot go,
On whom she's brought such shame.

Her early friends now pass her by.
No loving words or laughing eye,—
Their wont, in former time.

All treat her cool, or with contempt,
Except the great Attorney Kemp.
A pretended friend for vile intent,
Yet foiled in his design.

Shunned, and despised and left alone,
No hand to shield or give a home,
With spirits sinking down:
How one wrong act youth's hope destroys!
To be a drunkard's wife was not her choice.
Nor could she love such a face and voice,
Yet she married that son of Brown.

And here the words are aptly said,
"A warning take how you make your bed
For sure as Heaven's above,
Better regret than repent instead,
A living death is worse than dead;
It is better to love where you cannot wed,
Than wed where you cannot love.

Now unpaid bills come thick and fast.
The old hotel is quit, at last,
For a hovel, far less grand.
Six years have passed since that marriage morn.
Two puny children to them are born,
With none to feed or keep them warm,
But that poor mother's hand.

He at his home will not reside,
Except for meals that wife provides,
Such a wretch he has become.

Heeds not his family's want and woes,
But daily to the bar room goes,
And even pawns his children's clothes,
To buy his cursed rum.

No kind word greets poor Nellie's ear
To smooth her path, her heart to cheer,
As the end is drawing nigh.
Now weak and wasted she appears,
From cold and want those few short years,
By her children's couch in prayers and tears
She lays her down to die.

Now fold her hands across her breast,
Above a heart at last at rest,
And freed from all its pain.
The demands of law are satisfied,
And human kindness has been denied;
By the demon Rum, she pined and died.
Great God, Where is the gain?

Part Fifth

The Porter's Story

"All Aboard," the conductor cries,
Then waves his hand, and off she flies
'Mid distant hills toward eastern skies
Till all is lost to sight.
Among the crowd the train left there,
Was a tall young man, exceeding fair,
And being arrayed in rich attire,
With a countenance, clear and bright.

Then, turning to a porter, standing round,
"Can you tell me, sir, of a Mr. Brown,
Who used to keep hotel in town,
May now, for what I know?"
"No, he's left this world, so I expects
If you find old Brown, you must go to the next;
For really he passed in his checks,
A dozen years ago."
"Well, can you tell me of the son,
Or another, a sort of a hanger on,
Who married the girl, so very young,
And worked for his board and beer?"
"Well, sir, it's a tale of great disgrace.
You must be a stranger in this place,
To not have heard of this curious case,
Or else been long from here.

"That hanger on was a drinking toad,
One night got on too big a load,
And got pitched out into the road,
And broke his neck, I think.
Young Brown was a very nice man, you know:
But married the widder, and she was low,
She'd been to prison, a term or so,
And he finally took to drink.

"She was that bad, so said report,
The authorities thought to spoil her sport.
My Dad was Judge then at the court,
Had her in prison flung.

Her partner thought, to save his soup,
He just go up and cleared the coop,
And jined a western thieving troop,
  Was caught for crime, and hung."

"And now to come to the present time.
Poor Brown in an asylum is confined;
He being much broken in his mind,
  From tremens, so 'tis said.
Three days ago, so I've been told,
Some neighbors went to their wretched hole,
And found Mrs. Brown stark, stiff, and cold,
  Beside her children, dead."

Like as the wind might shake the leaf,
His manly form, convulsed with grief,
And sighed, "Poor Nell," his voice beneath,
  "I ne'er shall see you more."
"Why need this tale so trouble you?
They're nothing but a beggarly crew.
There comes the funeral train in view,
  And the Overseer of the Poor.
You'll see no mourners in that ar' row,
But her boy of four, and her girl of two,
And they to the poor-house will have to go
  As soon as the funeral is o'er."
Then spake the stranger undismayed,
"Those expenses, sir, shall all be paid.
If with your Overseer I can make a trade,
  They shall trouble you no more."

Next day before the eventide
That stranger westward was seen to ride,
With those two little orphans by his side,
And never was seen there more.
He was a brother, some people said,
Some thought a spirit came from the dead,
But one old Sport, he shook his head,
'Twas that clerk of Pigeon's store.

Let us inquire, who have the insight,
Where is the wrong the laws made right;
Or where the aid society might
Have given before too late?
And could the law have seized on him,
He would have been crushed for his boyish sin,
And a people would never so proud have been,
When he governed a western State.

THE OLD MAN'S STORY

SHE was a joyous little sprite,
Of age scarce four years old,
With peach-like cheeks, and eyes so bright,
Her flaxen hair so long and light,
Just tinged with sunny gold.

I was her senior by twenty year;
I'd lived a free and single life,
And nothing would have seemed so queer,
Or filled my mind with greater fear,
Than the thought of taking a wife.

And many an evening after tea,
When often to her home I've been,
She used to sit upon my knee,
And tell me that she was going to be
When she was grown, a queen.

And would have a castle, big as a barn,
And lots of servants to provide her food,
And silken gowns to keep her warm,
I might be her steward and mind her farm,
If I were only good.

Sweet little Rose, how blest the theme
Her childlike thoughts impart;
Little did I think, or even dream
That she in fact would be a queen,
And reign within my heart.

Yet frequently when I've been there,
To while away an hour of life,
She used to sport about my chair,
And took delight to comb my hair
I would call her "little wife."

Though four score years have come and gone,
And I full many a fair face have seen,
But none to me produced that charm
Like that sweet face and fairy form
Of Rose, my baby queen.

But time flew by full fast I own,
Like as the breeze sweeps o'er the hill,

And Rose to womanhood had grown;
The sweetest flower from bud had blown,
While I seemed standing still.

Though I was more than twice her age,
How very strange it seemed to me
When once we met within the stage,
And in conversation did engage,
So coarse I seemed to be.

And could it be, this charming girl
Was the outgrowth of that pretty child?
It put my reason in a whirl,
She seemed a being from some other world,
My pulse beat high and wild.

And long before that journey closed,
Cupid, with unerring dart,
However long I'd been disposed
To female charms to be opposed,
Touched my reluctant heart.

And so it was in season due,
Nor waited long for time to come,
In stammering words though short and few,
Or what I said I never knew,
But my Rose was wooed, and won.

A fairer blossom never grew;
Whose name she ever bore in life,
With a heart so gentle, kind, and true,
No sweeter face I ever knew,
My beautiful girl wife!

And when a year of bliss had flown,
And passed a final trying stage,
A tiny infant claimed our home,
To share our love, to call our own,
And comfort us in age.

I'd fondly hoped, for the mother's sake
As I was old 'twould have been a son.
But after birth no choice we make,
So our baby girl to our hearts did take
And said "God's will be done."

We called our little darling Grace.
She was so winning mild and fair,
A little sunbeam in the place,
And bore her mother's form and face
With but my eyes and hair.

My Rose was a charming girl beside—
To me there was no other;
But dearer when my wedded bride,
Yet never gave me half the pride,
As when a fair young mother.

So year by year the time went by,
On fairy wings it seemed to move;
So happy was my Rose and I,
Without a cause to grieve or sigh,
Blest in each other's love.

No thought of sorrow gave us woe,
Unless it be of a borrowed kind.

I being old, and told her so,
I soon to the unknown world must go,
And leave all dear behind.

Sweet as a flower the dews retain
Her eyes would fill with tears I'd see,
Then said, "Who knows which shall remain?
Don't talk so, dear, you give me pain,
You long may outlive me."

How little thought I at that time,
That her words would come so true!
She being young, and in her prime;
Yet years have dimmed these eyes of mine,
Since last I looked on her adieu.

Our little Grace grew fast and fair.
The years flew by as ebbs the tide.
She scarce had reached her eighteenth year,
When a neighboring lad came often there,
And sought her for his bride.

We said such course at once must stop,
Our babe of only yesterday!
And whether he was good or not,
We could not even bear the thought,
That she should go away.

But as for Grace, dear gentle child!
Made no complaint to weep or wail,
Though silent grew yet always mild,
And ever met us with a smile,
Yet day by day grew thin and pale.

"Mother," said I, "if Grace would wed,
Let's not oppose our darling girl,
We all must lie as we make our bed,
How apt the words of Him who said,
"For this cause came I into the world."

So in a little time 'twas known
Our full and free consent did give.
Two loving hearts were made as one.
We lost not Grace, but gained a son,
As both came home with us to live.

What need I tell, as the years went by,
Of every care, of every joy,
Of the mutual pride of Rose and I,
As in his mother's arms he lay
Our bouncing fine grand-boy.

And now the years told hard on me.
My very bones were full of pain,
Without my specks I could not see,
My staff was my constant company,
My limbs were stiff and lame.

While Rose was lithe as at seventeen;
O, how it filled my heart with joy,
As oft behind the window screen
I've watched them frolic on the green,
My Rose and her grand-boy.

When about the place we've often searched,
When we found the one there was the other.

No pair of peas were better matched;
He to his "dramma" seemed more attached,
Than to his own fond mother.

But an unseen foe was lingering near
With which no human power can cope.
Those bright blue eyes grew strangely clear,
Bright spots on either cheek appear,
With pain in chest and throat.

And so I watched my flower decay,
Without the power to help or save,
I saw her failing day by day,
Until the thread of life gave way,
And she sank into her grave.

O, that dreadful night, can I forget,—
Though years may roll and seasons fly,
When by her dying couch I sat
My grief too great my cheeks too wet,
She kissed me, whispered a last "Good-bye."

And strange it seems that I've lived on,
My star of hope forever set,
Night passed away, the morning came,
All joy for me forever flown,
And still I'm lingering yet.

I took the child in my embrace,
Who cried as if his heart would break,

And carried him to the hallowed place,
That he might once more behold the face
Of poor "dramma" who nevermore would speak.

Then in the cold, remorseless ground,
They laid my Rose, my beautiful dead,
My heart-strings broke by every sound
Of the stone and earth that tumbled down,
Upon that coffin lid.

And from that day 'twas plainly seen,
That poor little boy began
To be sad and silent, grew pale and lean,
And now a little grave is green,
Beside that larger one.

And still I'm lingering near the gate,
That soon must open and let me pass,
Why is it such should be my fate,
So very long I have to wait,
To meet my loved at last?

Now many years have passed away
Since all was lost that cheered my home,
My eyes are dim, my locks are grey,
But I hope to meet my Rose some day,
Where death can never come.

I LAY ME DOWN TO SLEEP

WHY waste my time in anxious thought?
To wreak and range and ramble o'er,
The paths of the past almost forgot,
Like youthful days to come no more.
Bright days have lost their wonted glory
Damp chills of earth around me creep,
All seems a wierd and wornout story,
I lay me down to sleep, dear one,
I lay me down to sleep.

Once this face, now old and wrinkled,
Was like thine own, round, rosy, fair,
And those locks with gray now sprinkled,
Were former curls of chestnut hair.
And things that once held high attraction
And filled my soul with pleasure deep,
Affords but little satisfaction.
I lay me down to sleep, dear one,
I lay me down to sleep.

In days of youth, of mirth and pleasure,
Little forethought we can have
Of the journey short in measure,
From the cradle to the grave.
And when I hear the church bells tolling,
Some will laugh and some will weep,
While youthful feet for pleasure strolling,
I lay me down to sleep, dear one,
I lay me down to sleep.

Joyous hearts for woe unfitted
With face to smile and voice to laugh,
Sweet innocence, how much I've pitied,
For unseen snares along your path.
Whether beset by thorns or flowers,
You, your destined course must keep,
Whether the day brings sun or showers,
I lay me down to sleep, dear one,
I lay me down to sleep.

I used to think in fancies wild,
Before I had been better told,
That I should always be a child,
And that the aged were always old.
Too soon I learned we pass away
From those beloved, who for us weep
For time will surely bring decay:
I lay me down to sleep, dear one,
I lay me down to sleep.

O, the days of mirth and gladness,
Save those my childish eyes have seen,
Compared with those of woe and sadness,
Are very few and far between.
When we recall life's weary journey,
The times we have least cause to weep
Were days we passed in happy childhood
Or in the hours of blissful sleep, dear one,
In the hours of blissful sleep.

When a few more days are ended,
When a few more journeys o'er

When a few more ways are wended
We must fall to rise no more;
In that long perpetual slumber,
The aching heart and weary feet,
Shall rest while age on age shall number,
We shall lay us down to sleep, dear one,
We shall lay us down to sleep.

RESIGNATION

AH! darling must I give you up?
Oft this sad thought comes through my brain,
To me it is a bitter cup
If to the dregs I have to drain.
Thy voice comes to me o'er and o'er,
Each day I miss you more and more;
Like you, I never loved before
Nor shall I ever love again.

And is it thus that we must part?
I almost hear the sentence given,
I feel the fingers at my heart,
I feel the cords of affection riven.
That dreadful day seems drawing nigh,
Some certain signs so signify,
And when it comes I can but die
Or be to hopeless madness driven.

Ah! darling must I part from thee?
And leave all hope of joy behind?
If you prefer someone to me
For thy dear sake I'll be resigned;
Brightest of days have on us shone
And sweetest joys together known
Our mutual grief in tears have flown
In one our mingled love's combined.

Then darling must I give you up?
Can I forget the happy past
When memories like a mighty troop
Through my burning brain are driving fast?
For soon the time will come, I know
And that e'er long, that I must go
Where none awake to weep, or woe,
This aching heart will rest at last.

When other hands shall clasp thine own,
And other lips to thine are pressed
When peace, and joy, shall fill thy home
And loving smiles thy heart shall bless,
And I perchance am laid away
So cold in death this heart shall lay
Fast moldering back to mother clay.
That heart that ever loved you best.

APROPOS THE SCARLET LETTER

O WHY art thou waking thou bit of humanity,
Why look with such eyes I once loved so dear?
They mind me of pleasure, of sorrow, and vanity,
And fates too delusive, to welcome you here.
Peacefully slumber, my sweet little darling
Until age, and reason awake thee to shame
Too soon now thy innocent tears will be falling
In sorrow for bearing thy own mother's name.

O, had I the power to hide from thee ever
The cause of thy grief, you never should know,
But kindred affection, alas, I can't sever
So still you must share in thy poor mother's woe.
And were I to give my babe to another
Where of earth's choicest treasures she could have her fill
Yet there would be in the heart of thy mother
A sorrow, that nothing but death could it still.

Sweet little baby, who have you offended,
And what fault is yours because you were born
Outside of wedlock, which ne'er was intended?
Yet you're a mark for the finger of scorn,

What justice to slight you for the sin of another,
Were my life your ransom, how quick it I'd give.
The fates that ordained, now make you to suffer
A lasting disgrace, so long as you live.

But listen my darling, your father's a preacher,
A servant of God, and a light in the Church,
But pardon my child, he's a falsehearted creature
As shown by the one he has left in the lurch.
Beloved by his parish and greatly respected,
At night on his pillow, he lays him to rest,
And I in my cottage, lone and rejected
While the sad scarlet letter burns deep on my breast.

Child of misfortune, you will learn to remember
Though a father disown you, and years may have flown
The heart of thy mother is still warm and tender
And yearns for that babe that she once called her own.
"Father in Heaven, such ways seem inhuman,
And where is the justice in such a decree?
That sorrow and shame must be heaped upon woman
When man quite as quilty may ever go free."

A MOTHER'S LAMENT FOR HER DEAD BABE

CLOSE not that small coffin, O grant me my right,
Come pity my anguish, ye mothers around,
Of my darling dead babe let me have one last sight,
Before it's consigned to the pitiless ground.

You may call it weakness, and wonder I've cared
For a life, as you say, that I never have known.
But the two lives in one together we've shared.
The Bud is now blasted before it was blown.

For long weeks together with motherly consistence,
In high expectation my mind had its fill.
By every sign of the little existence,
My soul's every fiber with joy gave a thrill.

Those wee tiny garments are worn all unheeded;
So skillfully wrought by a fond mother's hand.
The neat little cradle will never be needed
High in the chamber all empty will stand.

With fondest affection I've thought of my child.
By anticipation, bright fancy was fed.
But when I beheld thee my heart it went wild.
But God knows my grief when I found you was dead.

Those dead sunken eyes I imagined so bright,
I should lovingly watch as the seasons went by,
In death they were closed, e'er they e'en saw the light;
Those pale little lips never once breathed a sigh.

That sweet little face, so near like another
I had lovingly longed to lay on my breast.
In death was embraced before knowing a mother,
And soon in the cold silent earth it must rest.

Pain I must feel, from thy natural subsistence,
A sad, sad reminder, else why should I care?
When all I have left of thy earthly existence
Is a dear little lock of thy soft baby hair.

How can I live, so soon thou hast left me!
Thy dear little face I shall see nevermore.
The same hand that gave, hath in sorrow bereft me,
The joy of my heart, earth can never restore.

Still I know, if there's a far better home
All free from life's sorrows, its pain, death, and care,
The same voice that bid little children to come,
Will cheerfully welcome my dear baby there.

THE GOLDEN ROBIN

FAST falls the flying fleecy snow,
Dark and dismal dawns the day,
Dead and sear the grass lays low,
In icy bonds the streamlets flow
Ever on their endless way.

Vale, and hill, fair fields, and flowers,
All proclaim the summer's past,
It's silvern shade and leafy bowers
Left like some lingering hope of ours,
Stripped of it's joy at last.

As I stood watching that Winter's day,
The late green earth white manteled o'er,
A Summer songster in bright array
Through falling snow she took her way
Straight for my cottage door.

"Oh! golden robin! I am surprised,
That you at such a time should come,
When dark and lowering are the skies
And cold and fierce the wind may rise
Around my cheerless home.

O, no, sweet bird, it will not do,
In my cold home, you could not stay
Yet often will I think of you,
As you your southern way pursue
You now must fly away.

Sweet golden robin, don't think it wrong,
That parted thus we now must be,
The time would come, and that e'er long,
That grief would take the place of song,
'Tis best for you and me.

A loving mate perhaps there be,
Who now is watching thy return,
Calling thy name continually,
As flying fast from tree to tree,
I would not make him mourn.

Then clinging close to the window stay
A shiver shook her little form,
With beseeching eyes she seemed to say
O, let me in, O, do, I pray,
And shield me from the storm.

But I was firm and yielded not,
Although I knew where duty lay
A selfish maiden in my cot,
I wished no cares to take my thought
And so I frightened her away.

And then for weeks of Winter storm,
Of wind and clouds the time went by,

My little friend had not returned,
I hoped had found some shelter warm,
Beneath some southern sky.

Yet often when in dreams I lay,
I have been awaked by means untold,
A bird-like voice would seem to say
O, let me in, O do, I pray,
My heart is growing cold.

Then springing up in great affright,
I'd ask who's this that's calling me,
But nothing save the moon's pale light,
While watching o'er that Winter's night,
In my empty room I see.

But Winter days soon passed away,
With Spring's bright sun the snow had fled,
As I was looking out one day
Just 'neath my chamber window lay
That golden robin—dead.

'Twas then my fault came plain to view,
And penitent tears like rivulets run,
And why that voice now well I knew:
I'd left for other hands to do
The thing I should have done.

Now superstitious you may me call,
And say that birds do have no soul,
But will not we account for all,
To Him who minds the sparrow's fall
Will not he heed the oriole?

All fellow creatures we are made
Of earth, and earthly blessings share,
Then why should I withhold my aid
From mortals of a lower grade
Intrusted to my care?

WANTAS'QUET VALLEY

POETS may sing their praise of Greece,
Or Italy's fair Rome,
Where beauty blooms and wealth increase
And standing guard is the price of peace;
There is a place surpassing these,
And a little nearer home.

Like as Jerusalem in by-gone days,
Hemmed in by mountains round about,
Close at the foot, the valley lays
Safe from the blasts the wind-gods raise,
While a river runs through winding ways,
And slowly saunters out.

Two mighty chiefs, we understand,
Called Aristocracy, and Common-sense,
Long time ago, each tried his hand
Of this fair vale, to get command;
But Common-sense secured the land
Old A— was driven hence.

I've traveled far in many a clime
From Southern sun to Northern snows,

Yet of them all I fail to find
A better place for human kind
In all respects to please the mind,
In the plain where old Wantas'quet flows.

Many scenes have been enacted here,
In this secluded valley
Dramatic plays and games appear,
A suicide, the mourner's tear,
And brilliant men of many a sphere,
And the Democratic rally.

There is no place beneath the sun
For size and population,
Where high and low, old and young,
So often meet for feast and fun
With a warm welcome for everyone
Without remuneration.

Ah, to my heart and memory dear
That lasts as long as life shall last
Though I was never a native there
I've often met them in their cheer
With many now gone to that unknown sphere,
To join the throng that's past.

How short the time seems since our birth.
"Life's but a span" some sage has said.
The throng of to-day is fraught with mirth
Whether classed of much or little worth
Alike return to mother earth
While others come instead.

A FRAGMENT

OFT the way seems dark and dreary
Voyaging with this motly throng;
Modes of human passion vary,
Sometimes right and sometimes wrong.
Friends are few, and foes are many,
Truth's a gem in seas of lies;
Friends are made by being friendly,
Vinegar never catches flies.

JOHN AND MARY

A TRUE TALE OF YE OLDEN TIMES VERSIFIED

OH! those times, those good old times,
I would describe it if I could:
When the country was all new,
And settlers' cabins, far and few,
The land an almost unbroken wood.

The settler chose the highest ground
Where beach and maple were wont to grow;
And then for days, for miles around,
The echoes woke by the axe's sound,
As he felled the timbers blow by blow.

And then there was a raising bee,
And the settlers came from miles away,
To lend a hand in time of need,
That the new neighbor might succeed,
And no one thought of asking pay.

A house of logs was quickly made,
With barely boards for roof and floors,
Fireplace and hearth of stone were laid,
Where a big log fire its warmth conveyed
To every place within the doors.

The wife and baby soon appear
To make complete a model home.
The family altar was erected there,
And round their hearth they knelt in prayer,
Giving thanks to God for His constant care
And many mercies shown.

Year by year his clearings grew,
From the acre plot to full four score.
His crops were good, for the land was new,
And children numbering not a few,—
Ofttimes a dozen or more.

But the settler's life was no summer's dream,
Filled with danger, toil and care.
The savage redskin oft was seen,
And oft was heard the panther's scream,
The howling wolf and prowling bear.

His path was always filled with foes.
Nothing was safe without the yard.
His sheep and cattle were chiefly those
Of which the wild beasts mostly chose,
Yet human life was seldom spared.

Yet of those times it might be said,
"As thy day so shall thy strength be."
The fear of death held for them no dread,
And often gathered at some homestead,
A young and jolly company.

For youthful spirits will effervesce,
'Tho with danger fraught on every hand,
For in those days of dire distress,
Hands were clasped and lips were pressed,—
Mother Nature's great command.

On such a time, so I've been told,
I think my grandma told the same,
For many a tale she could unfold,
And songs she'd sing both good and old,
Which deserved for her a brighter fame.

She lived and loved and had her day,
And many talents she possessed.
But time is sure to bring decay,
At middle age she passed away,
To return no more, like all the rest.

But I'm digressing, I plainly see,
From the tale I had laid out to tell.
But if you will but bear with me,
I will describe it truthfully,
As I remember it very well.

Once on a time, one winter night,
So many, many long years ago,

The earth was clad in her robe of white,
And the cold-eyed stars were all the light,
  Save that reflected by the snow.

An invitation had been sent
  To old and young both far and near,
And so it was that many went,
With happy hearts and good intent,
  To enjoy a night of social cheer.

Many there were that came straightway,
  For it took but few families for a company.
Some came on foot at the close of day,
And some with oxen with sled for sleigh,
  For roads were of uncertain quantity.

All were met with a shake of hand
  And a cordial greeting at the door,
For at that time, throughout the land,
Class distinction held no command:
  All were welcome, rich and poor.

Among the other guests that came
  Was a couple, fair as are often met:
John and Mary were their names,
Leaders were they in all the games,
  Best dancers of the set.

John was a tall and manly youth,
  With perfect form and visage bright;
And Mary, with her flaxen curls,
Was the envy of all the other girls,—
  A blonde of the truest type.

Modest, winning, kind and true,
Of perfect mold and face as fair
As any girl you would often find.
Possessed was she of a brilliant mind,
As blondes most always are.

In game or play 'twas plain to see
That Cupid's wand had made them one;
So happy in each other's company;
And the old folks whispered confidently
That a match was sure to come.

The so-called trencher then was rolled
And guessings made on many a riddle,
Forfeits were paid, but not in gold,
And nimble feet stepped light and bold,
To the cadence of the fiddle.

There was a play, near out of date,
By many now perhaps forgotten,
When all were asked, both small and great
With folded hands to sit and wait,
While someone passed the button.

Then each one offered open hand,
While those passing drew their's through
With the button between their palms,
And leaving it with any of them
Saying, "Hold fast all I give you."

Then each in turn was asked to guess
In whose hands the button lay.

But if mistaken, by wrong impress,
For such mistake there was no redress,
Except a forfeit they had to pay.

And oft a forfeit would resound,
For the kiss was largely in demand,
And when the button was passed around,
By John or Mary 'twas easy found,
As 'twas often left in the other's hand.

A simple easy little play,
And little skill required, of course,
Yet there are those at the present day
Compared with that, I am bold to say,
From a moral view are a great deal worse.

The party o'er all started home,
To reach the place as best they could.
A few there were on foot had come,
And John and Mary were them among,
Must pass a lonely stretch of wood.

The half way tree was scarce passed by,
When sharp rang out from a distant hill
A wolf's lone howl, or plaintive cry,
And then another did reply,
In a voice so sharp and shrill.

And then again a dismal howl,
And that was answered by another,
From place to place they seemed to call,
Until a dozen or more in all
Were coming on, and close together.

They hurried on, but on looking back,
With but little chance to escape the brutes,
There they saw upon their track
The hideous, hungry, howling pack
Most hotly in pursuit.

Now something quickly must be done,
Or killed they all would surely be;
So for a tree they quickly run.
John stood the last till every one
Was helped into the tree.

He scarcely the first limb had reached
When the foremost of the hungry brutes
Came dashing up to their friendly beech
And by a strong and desperate leap,
Just barely grazed his boots.

The baffled brutes then stood about,
And snapped their jaws with strong desire.
They sniffed the air with their pointed snout,
Their upturned eyes shone fiercely out,
Like burning balls of fire.

There came a crash, or a breaking sound,
From the limb that Mary rested on;
And then was seen her snow-white gown,
As through the boughs went fluttering down,
As she cried, "O God, I'm gone."

All eyes looked down with speechless pain.
Then there was an angry rush and roar,

Poor John, he strove the ground to gain.
If not by other hands restrained,
  There would have been one victim more.

The whole mad gang their victim caught
  Before she'd hardly reached the ground:
They barked and snarled, and strove, and
    fought,
Tearing her in pieces on the spot,
  And dragging her body all around.

Merciful God! Why should it been!
  Horror, anguish, and surprise!
Words can't express the horrid din,
They literally tore her limb from limb,
  And ate her up before their eyes.

Perched in that tree they had to stay,
  The wolves never going out of sight,
Until the dawn of another day,
When one by one they sneaked away,
  As if warned by the coming light.

Then silently they all crept down,
  Chilled and benumbed by the wintry air.
The snow was stained for rods around,
But naught of poor Mary could be found
  But a blood-stained lock of her flaxen hair.

It seemed the sun shone sadly down,
  As they took their way from the dreadful
    spot.

Sad was the day as the news spread round.
But time is a healer of many a wound.
  But poor Mary was ne'er forgot.

Poor John lived on, and yet that scene
  In sleep was repeated o'er and o'er.
It was always with him in his dream,
"The wolves! The wolves!" he would waking
    scream
  Till he slept to wake no more.

For many years the old tree stayed
  When all its mates had been laid low:
And cattle grazed beneath its shade,
And round its roots fair children played,
  Where Mary died so long ago.

No marble tablet marked the place
  Or other monument had she.
But when the traveler came that way
It was pointed out without delay,
  And was always known as Mary's tree.

HAIL, CHESTER

ALL HAIL! all hail! to Chester town
  The jest of many for miles around,
  They must now look up instead of down
On her fair features.
A glorious change at last is found,
  By ten concretors.

We gladly hail with heart, and eyes,
Improvements in whatever guise
And everything of enterprise
  Our approval meets.
And yet, 'Twas not considered wise,
  To light our streets.

All hail! all hail! to Pollard Brothers,
Who set up shop for making clothes;
Though small reward accrues to those
  Who take the stitches
Each little income well he knows,
  Increases riches.

While some sit round, and smoke, and talk
Of great industries and taking stock,
The Colonel always toes the chalk
  While others fail.
From the new industry, he built his walk;
  All hail! all hail!

The concrete fever fairly rages
'Mong all conditions, sex and ages;
Tho' Pierce, and Pollard, were the pioneer
      sages,
  To start the ball,
To others whose names would fill these pages
  All hail! to all!

'Tis many years since the above was penned
And concrete walks do now extend

Main Street, Chester, Vermont

Through our beautiful burg from end to end,
O'er hill and dale.
While electric lights their luster lend,
We now all hail!

A FATHER'S ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF HIS DAUGHTER'S PICTURE

O WOULD I had the power of Burns,
Or eloquence of Cowper,
That I might thank you in return
With words correct and proper.
But as for that I must concede
The will must answer for the deed,
The tongue may lack what words we need;
But actions live thereafter.

Dear daughter, when your package came,
I was filled with expectation,
For I knew that nothing weak or tame
Would answer your donation.
So I, and mother, side by side,—
We either cut, or the knot untied,—
When your sweet picture we espied
The choicest in creation.

My old heart fairly gave a bound
With gratitude at knowing,
With all the pleasures you have found
A daughter's love still showing.

At the window I desired to be,
And mother came and stood by me,—
I turned so a tear she might not see,
That down my cheek was flowing.

Loving and long I viewed the face,
Thinking of what it used to be:
The childlike form, the childlike grace
When seated on your papa's knee.
I seemed to see you just the same,
When first you learned to lisp my name.
I live it o'er and o'er again:
Like as a dream it seems to me.

* * * * * * * *

Now here my muse must close her eyes
To my absorbing theme:
For mother comes, to my surprise,
And bids me churn the cream.
In most of places the poet desires
To warm himself by the Muses' fires
But in a churn his zeal expires
And vanishes like a dream.

The butter is brought, and once again
My affrighted muse regains her place.
No one can stand the dreadful strain,
Unless they are well supplied with grace:—
That is, if with a dasher churn
For wicked thoughts will in them burn

So here my sober thoughts return
Unto my precious picture's face.

* * * * * * * *

How many days have come between
Thy childhood and maturer years!
How many suns our eyes have seen,
How many days of joys and fears!
From day to day how little shown,
From infancy to age full grown,
And when the full fledged bird is flown
The parent heart is filled with tears.

But why withal should I repine?
Or count my fate a dismal doom?
The scion plucked from the parent vine
May, in some other garden bloom.
We know your heart of consistency
Can neither estranged nor loveless be.
You love us all most tenderly;
And will till in the silent tomb.

With many thanks for your picture, dear,
I have often looked on it and smiled
Though thoughts of parting brings a tear
Yet to my fate I'm reconciled.
Tho' far from home you may reside,
And trust yourself to friends untried,
A parent's love will e'er abide
With every blessing for my child.

'TIS SWEET TO BE REMEMBERED

'TIS sad, yet sweet, when from friends we part,
With choking voice, and moistened eye
To know that we within that heart
Shall long out-live that last good-bye;
Though years and miles we may be sundered
'Tis sweet to know we are remembered.

When comes the time, "the bowl is broken"
The race is run, life's journey ends,
The departing soul feels words unspoken
And craves the presence of its friends;
Though human aid can supply no breath
Affection's cord is strong as Death.

And when we're laid in the cold damp ground
And hid away from the light of day
Could dead deaf ears receive a sound
When some sad mourner comes that way
To hear them say while lingering near
"A friend of mine lies buried here."

And when as by that mound they knelt
With a falling tear and heartfelt throb
Our silent heart, though long were dead
Were fain to give a responsive throb
And say "God's blessing be on thee
Because you do remember me."

Oh, no, no, no, 'tis not the ease
  Death comes alike to one and all;
The fondest mother in death's embrace
  Heeds not her offspring's piteous call,
And so the form that we love to-day
Will soon be mouldering into elay.

How sad the thought that we must part
  That we shall meet our loved no more,
But faith and hope both give us heart
  And point us to that other shore
Where after grieving, tears, and sighs,
That life, that's worth the living, lies.

And when I've crossed that stream I've feared
  And looking back from whence I've come
And know my memory is revered
  By the little good I may have done
For hopes deferred for which I've sighed
With this reward I'm satisfied.

Poor, passing shadows of the earth
  Whose longest days so short, and numbered
Whether blessed with much or little worth
  Each one loves to be remembered;
In life, or death, so let it be
With loving thoughts, remember me.

HOW CAN WE SING?

HOW can we sing, since the baby's gone?
The house seems empty, the rooms are sad and drear,
No sound of laughter, or snatch of happy song
And echo only greets the listening ear.

Sadly we look where her high chair used to stand
And in fancy seem to see her sitting there,
With loving smile, and cunning wave of hand,
Her bright blue eyes, and cheeks so plump and fair.

We miss the crib wherein she used to sleep;
Her many playthings scattered o'er the parlor floor,
Where a doting grandpa taught her how to creep,
An accomplishment she never knew before.

O, yes, our little darling's gone,
We crave no mirth nor sound of music's note.
Our eyes grow moist from a cause before unknown,
And try to swallow down the lump that fills the throat.

I seem to see her on her papa's knees,
When at the organ he ofttimes sat and played,

Her little hands drumming on the willing keys,
And baby voice the sweetest music made.

But now the organ gives forth no peal,
But seems to stand a thing, like us, distressed.
Reflecting back the way we so much feel,
A silent sharer of our loneliness.

How sad must be the fate of those
Whose little ones are called from earth away,
The crib, the chair, the baby clothes,
A sad reminder of some happier day.

But such events will oft appear,
When parents part with those they dearly love,
No, never more to greet them here;
Yet faith points upward to realms above.

But thanks, our baby is not dead,
But growing like the proverbial weed,
With parental hands to smooth her little bed
And minister to her every need.

Though far from us she now is gone,
With anxious thought our hearts still yearn.
May the powers protect and keep her well and strong
And oft to grandpa's house and home return.

AN ACROSTIC

FOR A COMRADE AND TENTMATE IN THE U. S. SERVICE

COME Here And Read Life's Earnest Story
H ere lies the secret few have found.
A ll seem inclined to greed or glory,
R esting not till aged and hoary.
L ife's greatest round is but a bound,
E arnest effort should be found,
S ome good to do while time's before thee.
H ark.

L ook After Reason, Keep It Near
A nd with wisdom fill the mind.
R ighteous conduct feels no fear,
K indness oft makes others kind.
I ncline to justice strong and clear,
N aught has earth to harm you here.

FRANCHISE

MY dear Miss—you ask me this,
If I attend the Town meeting to-night
However the case may there be placed
To vote for the electric light.

Now by the way, just let me here say,
And it may not be amiss,
And I will agree it shall so be
If you'll give each voter a kiss.

If you're feeling that such, I'm asking too much
And more than ought to be,
Why, I will consent to be quite content
If you'll extend my share unto me.

In this I can trace my grandfather's ease,
Which caused his descendants to grieve
Because he partook of some ill-sorted fruit,
Presented by grandmother Eve.

Were this the condition, and I take the position,
Regardless of goodness or guile
I'm not the first wight, who has bartered his right,
For a woman's kiss, or her smile.

You may so insist, I am asking amiss,
But of this little matter take note,
I have just as much right to ask for a kiss
As you in directing my vote.

Your beauty and ways, have attracted men's praise,
Their devotions have paid at thy shrine,
Therefore I don't blame you, but highly esteem you,
But remember I'm over the line.

FACTS AND PROPHECY, OR THE EDITOR'S HARD FATE

THERE'S many positions and pursuits of the day
For pleasure and profit admired,
While the newspaper editor's place (by the way),
At best should least be desired.

The editor has some deep water to ford,
And all sorts of favor to win;
Of all kinds of people, must say a good word,
No matter if they're ugly as sin.

But truth will out, he gives them a twist
In a paragraph, sentence, or line,
In a moment they're ready with a brick in each fist
To knock the poor scribe out of time.

Some town correspondent sends in his news
With a cut on some person, no doubt!
In arranging the copy the editor must choose,
And some of the matter's left out.

The week comes around, the post office is sought,
"Some one will catch blazes" 'tis hinted;
The eye scans each column, O, horrible thought
Not a word of their slander's been printed.

Their anger is started, they are up in a huff,
They will injure them all they are able,
Saying his paper abounds with such miserable stuff,
It is not fit to take out to the stable.

There's many a gentleman of high towering mind,
Must keep pace with the news of the day;
With his paper in pocket, and three years behind,
And the editor needing his pay.

Meanwhile the poor editor toils on at his desk,
Working and trusting for pay,
But promises, and lies, are not puddings, or pies,
He gets leaner and lanker each day.

But death comes at last, his labor is done,
No more of his "ad's" or his news;
This little inscription inscribed o'er his tomb:
"Died for want of his dues."

MORAL

Delinquent subscribers, on you I call,
Pray lend an ear, your doom to hear
In deep contrition drop a tear;
You will go to a place where you can't get beer,
Where the climate is warm and water is scarce
You will burn your clothes, if nothing worse,

The hand of justice will surely fall;
"The mills of the gods grind exceeding small;"
Such is the fate of one and all,
Who cheat the poor editor here.

THE MILLENNIUM

HOW many there be that set the day,
And show by some uncertain sign,
When this old earth shall pass away,
And close up her accounts with time.
While some have even gone so far
As to dress themselves in white attire
And mount some steep a little higher
For a flight to that Heavenly clime.

Why should immortal minds at least
Be to such threadbare theories given
To take such worthless, useless yeast,
Their spiritual loaf to leaven?
And fix their faith on words like these
"As untimely fruits are cast from trees
When shaken by a violent breeze
So stars shall fall from Heaven."

But I can point you to a sign
A sign as sure as life,
Which will plainly mark the end of time,
That is, of broil, and strife;
When human nature scorns the art
To know, and act, a double part

And each man's wife is his sweetheart
And his sweetheart his own wife.

All jealousies at once will cease,
And no more songs of "A Broken Home."
Unhappy pairs will then find peace,
Divorces will no more be known.
The preacher then can quit his desk,
The printer dump his printing press
And every heart will then find rest,
The Millennium will have come.

AN ACROSTIC

E ven Light Lies Ever Near,
L ights up the weary wanderer's way
L ife is full of pleasure here.
E very cloud will disappear,
N ight will turn to day.

W hile ill fortune listless lingers, independence
as may seem,
I s the helper to assist us, Hope an achor,
Faith a beam.
L ife is full of petty troubles, oft our lamp
seems burning low.
L ittle sorrows appear double, when magnified
by borrowed woe.
I mmortal minds should ne'er be sighing.
A lways trusting, woe defying,
M akes a tonic well worth trying;
S ure to bring relief, I know.

DESPERATION

AWAY all heartaching, begone from my bosom,
No more shall sad sorrow be the source of my lays.
Blow high, or blow low, whether the bush blast or blossom
I am bound to be merry the rest of my days.
Should winds of affliction come over me stealing,
And scatter my comforts like wind-driven chaff,
I will heed not its horror, by force of false feeling
In the midst of my misery I will lay down and laugh.

There once was a time, tho' time has no meaning,
It seems like a dream of some dim distant shore
When tenderest passion in beauty was beaming
Now fast fades the shadow to return never more.
No ties of affection shall ever possess me
My heart will grow colder till softened by death;
I will smile back at pain, or what once would distress me
I will mock at my misery, and lay down and laugh.

Still stands on that shore in the dim misty
distance,
A figure, the fairest my fancy e'er knew,
My boat's onward speeding, the distance un-
heeding
Till the shore and the figure are lost to my
view.
Come storm and disaster, my spirit relieving
No more will I follow the Siren's sad path
Where there's no deceiving, nor grieving, nor
leaving,
On the soft bed of Ocean, I will lay down and
laugh.

AN ACROSTIC

I n early morn Auroras rays,

L ifts high the curtains of the night,
O pens the windows and displays
V iews of life and light and praise,
E ach soul's delight.

Y et dim the light, that falls from Heaven,
O ver our skies, dark clouds are driven,
U nless by finer feelings given, love's purer
light.

THE SHIFTLESS OLD FARMER

Tune, Winham

WHAT wealth surrounds the farmer's path,
As followed by some old farmer!
A stunted pig, a lousy calf,
Two turkeys and a gobbler.

If children cry or beg for bread,
His barefoot wife, scarce clothes to wear,
He keeps a dog that must be fed,
To help along this old farmer.

Or if he strive great wealth to win,
And shows he is a financier
He keeps two dogs, and pups thrown in,
And ranks himself a millionaire.

A poor old horse he tries to keep
And rides whene'er he wants to stir.
In tobacco smoke he is always steeped
A highly scented old farmer.

His mortgage notes at length come due,
No funds are with the treasurer.
His patron puts foreclosure through,
And bounces out this old farmer.

He curses luck, and jaws his wife,
And lays the whole blamed thing to her,

But keeps his dog and smokes his pipe,
Just like a happy old farmer.

If cold or want should him attend,
He is not to blame, but others are.
He goes to see some distant friend,
A resourceful man is this old farmer.

He votes for license every time,
And takes his pay in a cheap cigar,
His wife works out and pays his fine,
For getting full, this old farmer.

Finally old death has him espied,
And wonders what God made him for,
He knocks him out, and so he died,
This shiftless, worthless old farmer.

LINES WRITTEN FOR WM. DOYEN WHILE HE WAS ILL

RESPECTED friend, to me you send,
To make you a composition
Concerning your case, the people, and place,
Your illness and every condition.

There was a time, when I could rhyme
Considered quite acceptable;
But now I fear as things appear
It might be very objectionable.

Should this not seem to hit the theme
I assure you what the fact is;
You will please excuse my sluggish muse,
She is sadly out of practice.

About your friends, no one contends,
But very kind they all have been,
But when once more you reach the shore,
"Watch out," they do not push you in.

For this you'll find in every clime
Such selfish interest, pocket pelf.
But I'll not decry any particular guy
I am only human myself.

It seems to me, I'd contented be,
Nor wish my illness a speedy end,
Or wish for verses, with two such beautiful nurses
At my bedside to attend.

It's no fault of ours if we love the flowers
Or in our presence get them.
Nor any harm to feel their charm
But, ah! one must not pick them.

Well, as for the Doctor it makes no matter
What people say or think of him,
For in every case where he has a race
With death, he is sure to win.

And now don't you think this will do
A weary moment to beguile?
So I'll regard as my reward
If only this produce a smile?

MY SINGING WIFE

SLOWLY, slowly, day is closing,
Soon the night comes dark and drear,
So the sands of life are flowing,
Soon will end my journey here;
Many the draught of earth I've tasted,
Of sorrow's cup and pleasures, rife,
But the joy that's longest lasted,
Was from the voice of a singing wife.

Talk not to me of wealth or station,
Of gilded halls or great renown,
The choicest gems of God's creation,
Are oft in humble places found;
How blest the hour what joy abounded
When from day it's toil and strife,
With little flaxen heads surrounded
I've listened to my singing wife.

At even-tide, times without number,
Our babe was no more blest than I
When I've repaired for rest and slumber,
Charmed by her soothing lulla-by

Storms would sometimes come 'tis true,
And she pitched her key to a different strain
But soon the sun of love broke through
And she resumed her song again.

Fairest flowers seem first to wither;
Scarce life's day had reached it's noon,
Those beautiful lips were closed forever,
That voice was hushed too soon, too soon.
Alas, can I forget the hour,
Though all around are gay and blithe,
When summoned by that unseen Power
I parted with my singing wife.

In course of time, I wed another,
Companion, on life's weary road,
To my little ones to be a mother,
And help me bear my heavy load.
A mild and gentle meek-eyed creature,
Who bore a wife's and mother's part,
Yet no note of joy escaped her,
A silent echo of my heart.

Many years we voyaged together
With no outward break or strife,
Yet I ne'er could understand her,
So different from my singing wife;
Wives and children all have left me,
While I a broken reed remain,
Death's cold dark wave, I'd welcome gladly,
But to hear that voice again.

And now I'm old, life's voyage most done,
I sit within my big arm chair,
In fancy seems two forms to come,
And stand on either side me there.
One with sober, solemn, mein,
The other with hope and pleasure rife,
So vividly appears the scene,
I list for the voice of my singing wife.

My time is short, but a little longer,
When I the harbor bar must pass,
A wish for rest is growing stronger,
I've seen of earthly joys the last.
And when the angel of death draws near,
And cuts this slender thread of life,
I hope to meet in a better sphere,
My tender, loving singing wife.

LETTER TO REAL ESTATE AGENT

YOUR letter sir, I did receive,
The 7th inst., being Saturday eve,
As agreed 'twixt you and I,
And now will hasten a reply;
Now Mr. G., I do regard,
That price is high with times so hard,
And furthermore one other thing,
I expected more than that one spring;
But from what you say I should infer,
You can easily find a customer,
But as for me 'twould never do,
Respectfully, L. A. Ballou.

MY GRANDMOTHER'S STORY

"O yes! I know, it was long ago,
Long, long before my generation,
When blazoned trees marked the traveler's way
And the horse was means of transportation,
Tho' very slow,
Or this country's folks were called a nation
So long ago."

And now I will say this is the way,
My grandmother began this tragic tale;
She could amuse the old or please the young,
In song or story, she could not fail
Of being best.
Her's was the one that would prevail
Above all the rest.

And the people thought their pleasures nought
In the place where dwelt this honored pair;
On all occasions she was sought
From the apple-cut to the house of prayer,
For she could sing
Or make herself useful anywhere,
At anything.

On festive nights when the people met
To enjoy themselves in a social time
With games, and riddles, song and dance,

For the eight-hand reel fell into line
With no fiddler near
My grandma's voice in cadence fine
Rose sweet and clear.

Mother was she of children three,
Two daughters and an only son,
And reared them all to maturity,
A mother's duty faithfully done.
All honor won.
Blessed be her hallowed memory
For such a son.

Destructive time, so it appears
Long years ago laid her to rest,
Her deeds outnumbering far her years
Were full of love and usefulness.
She was not old.
Among the stories she possessed
This one she told:

"It was long ago when the land was new,
And blazoned trees were the traveler's mark
And settlers' huts were far and few
And none could travel after dark
Until the morning;
The redskins' whoop, or the gray wolf's bark
Was a horrid warning.

Sometimes a settler cleared his ground
And built his cabin in a sightly spot

So he might see for miles around
The smoke arise from some neighbor's cot
For company.
For none could tell in an hour what
Their fate might be.

If they kept a cow she wore a bell
And her pasture limits was the ocean's bound;
By the 'tinkle, tinkle' they could tell
At night where bossy could be found
With little cost.
If the faithful bell gave forth no sound
Poor boss was lost.

Next morning when the sun arose,
The settler with his trusted gun
Would sally forth, just to disclose
Why his milk supply refused to come
For her usual cares.
He found her dead by a little run,
Being eaten by bears.

Such things as this often occurred
And was deemed an item mild
Compared with the story often heard
That some fond parent had lost his child
By Indians or beasts of prey.
Yet there were men enlightened styled
Far worse than they.

Now usually where the roadways crossed
A little hamlet would begin,

The school house with its frame of logs
And a larger building called an inn,
Where travelers staid,
Where board, and lodging, tobacco and gin
Was their stock in trade.

Some of these inns were truly pure
And in every way deserved the name,
While others received suspicion sure
As dens of vice and crime and shame
Within their door,
For travelers they oft would entertain
Who were seen no more.

Once there came a man from a distant town
With his good gray horse who passed that way,
He neared an inn as the sun went down
And so he thought he would stop and stay
For rest and food.
Now it chanced to be a hostelry
That was not good.

Two burly hostlers took his 'grey'
And to the log-barn led him down.
This man was going a debt to pay
In the King's good gold, full forty pound,
A pretty sum.
A lady on the back porch came 'round
And motioned 'come.'

He being an easy-going man
And knowing not whereof she meant
But seeing her beckon with her hand
He took the same for wrong intent
And thus misplaced her.
So quickly up the steps he went
And would embraced her.

Pale was her cheek and sad her eye,
With firmness keeping him at bay,
Saying, 'I could not bear to see you die,
One so fresh in manhood's day
With life before you.
Don't go to bed, or on it lay,
Thus I implore you.'

And as she spake she turned and fled
Saying, 'Now, young man, Adieu! Adieu!'
For Heaven's sake go not to bed;
You may think me wrong, but my heart is true,
Altho' I say it.
If I've been seen to speak with you
My life must pay it.'

And there he stood like one amazed,
His feet felt fastened to the floor
Until the host with smiling face
Came 'round the corner and stood before,
Saying, with wicked grin,
'My guests usually enter at the front door,
Come, let's go in.'

The old tall clock struck supper time;
In the dining room was a table spread,
Three big strong men sat in a line
The landlord sitting at the head
In a big arm chair,
And that self-same girl who nothing said
Was waitress there.

Supper over, he was shown his room,
With a tallow-dip, then a luscious light,
Everything looked well, no sign of gloom,
The pillows and sheets were snowy white
As those at home.
The landlord bid him a kind 'good-night.'
He was left alone.

The stand and walls were burden free
Of literature of any kind.
No scrap of picture could he see,
For one brief moment to take his mind
Except the bed
Upon which he was inclined
To rest his head.

He set him down in sad suspense
His pulse beat high, but with courage low,
Two flintlock pistols were his defence,
And they not always sure to go,
Without repriming;
While vicious voices down below
Kept constant chiming.

The clock had tolled the midnight hour,
And sleep had stolen away his fears,
For Morpheus held him in his power
In drowsiness, so it appears,
Low hung his head,
When that voice seemed sounding in his ears,
'Go not to bed.'

He opened his eyes and looked around,
And this he saw by the failing light,
A section of the floor go down
And the bed fast falling out of sight.
He sat aghast,
For had he slept thereon that night
Had been his last.

Soft as a leaf may sail the skys
Or cloud may kiss the mountain's crown
As silently as vapors rise,
So stilly did that bed go down.
Then there arose
Voices of excited sound
In angry oaths.

And then he heard the landlord say,
As boots came thundering up the stairs,
'By the gods! he never shall get away;
Someone has told him to beware
You may rely;
And if I knew who the traitors are
They too should die.'

They reached the door, and then with curses
Immediate entrance did demand.
He didn't wish to waste his forces,
And so in silence took his stand
Ready for action
So, if blood was spilt, to take a hand
In the transaction.

Sometime they lingered near the door-way
Meantime their anger growing hot,
They sometimes coaxed, and sometimes threatened
And sometimes through the panels shot,
Thinking to scare him,
Until at last, so fierce they got,
They made a rush, and broke the door in.

A sharp report from the traveler's gun,
And the foremost villain fell down dead.
For a breath the next refused to come
Till the host gave orders 'Go ahead.'
The end was near—
One more report, and the landlord fled.
The coast was clear.

He then sat down with his ghastly guests
The light having gone out meantime,
One had registered in the death angel's book
And the other was about to sign.
Ah! was it a dream?
A pistol shot the echoes shook
And then a woman's scream.

And thus he sat till the break of day
Filled with sorrow, fear, and wrath,
For he knew not but some miscreant lay
For secret mischief along his path
For his destruction.
And he believed a better way
Was introduction.

Daylight revealed the two men dead,
Death had set his mark on each up-turned face.
He looked around and behold the bed
Had again resumed its accustomed place,
Sweet rest to bring,
But now for it he had no taste,
A rejected thing.

On going below he opened a door
And met a scene of sad surprise
For there he saw upon the floor,
The maid he met the night before
Her long black hair all soaked with gore,
And the death film in her eyes.

He reached her side and assayed to speak
For as yet he saw she was not dead.
Her feeble breath came short and weak,
And the bullet wound showed in her head
From where he stood,
Her lips were blue, more pale her cheek
From loss of blood.

He said 'Dear lady, can't you speak?
Can not you give me one reply?
Who are your people that I may seek
Of your sad fate to notify
Or are there none?'
'Thank—God—you're saved—but—I—must
die.'
A gasp and she was gone.

Help was summoned from a neighboring burg
And the three dead bodies laid to rest.
The men were buried at the forks of the road
With a stake driven through each one's breast.
But the little maid
Had funeral service, the very best
And in the church yard laid.

Like a sleeping angel did she seem,
Laid in her coffin, lined with white,
Placed in her hand was a sprig of green,
While the preacher performed the last sad
rite.
Plenteous tears were shed.
None ever beheld such a solemn sight
'Round an unknown dead.

They searched the inn, and there they found
An elevator fine to see
And a deep dark vault, way under ground

Containing bodies, twenty-three
In every position.
Some decomposed to a great degree
And some in fair condition.

The landlord never was heard of more,
Perhaps the redskin took his scalp
Or in his wandering the forests o'er
May have gone to feed the she-wolf's whelp.
No one can tell.
But this is the way the people felt,
God's ways are just,
He knows what is best,
He doeth all things well.

GOOD-BYE

AND now kind friends receive our thanks.
Which are sincere and true,
For patiently you have borne with us,
To read this volume through.

As from weary day we welcome night
And for sweet rest we sigh,
So here the muse goes out of sight
And now we say, good-bye.

FEB 26 1912

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